

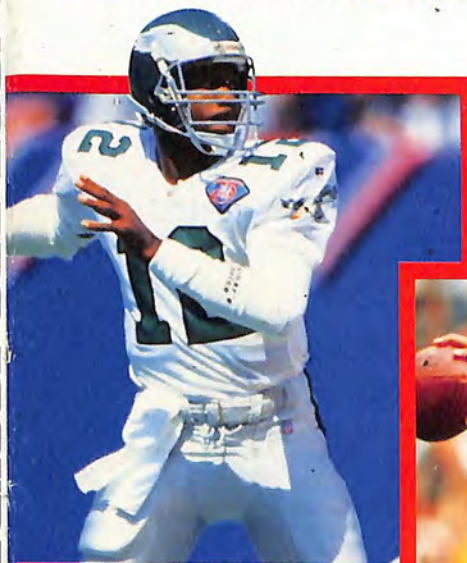
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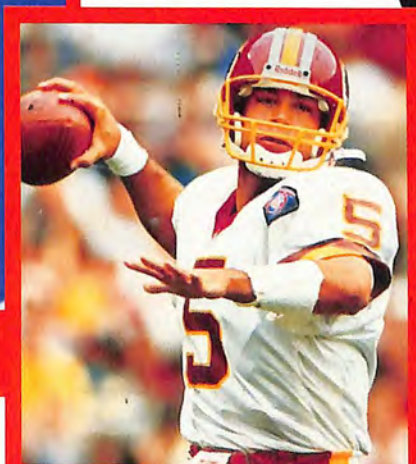


JOE **THEISMANN'S** *Pro Football Yearbook '95*

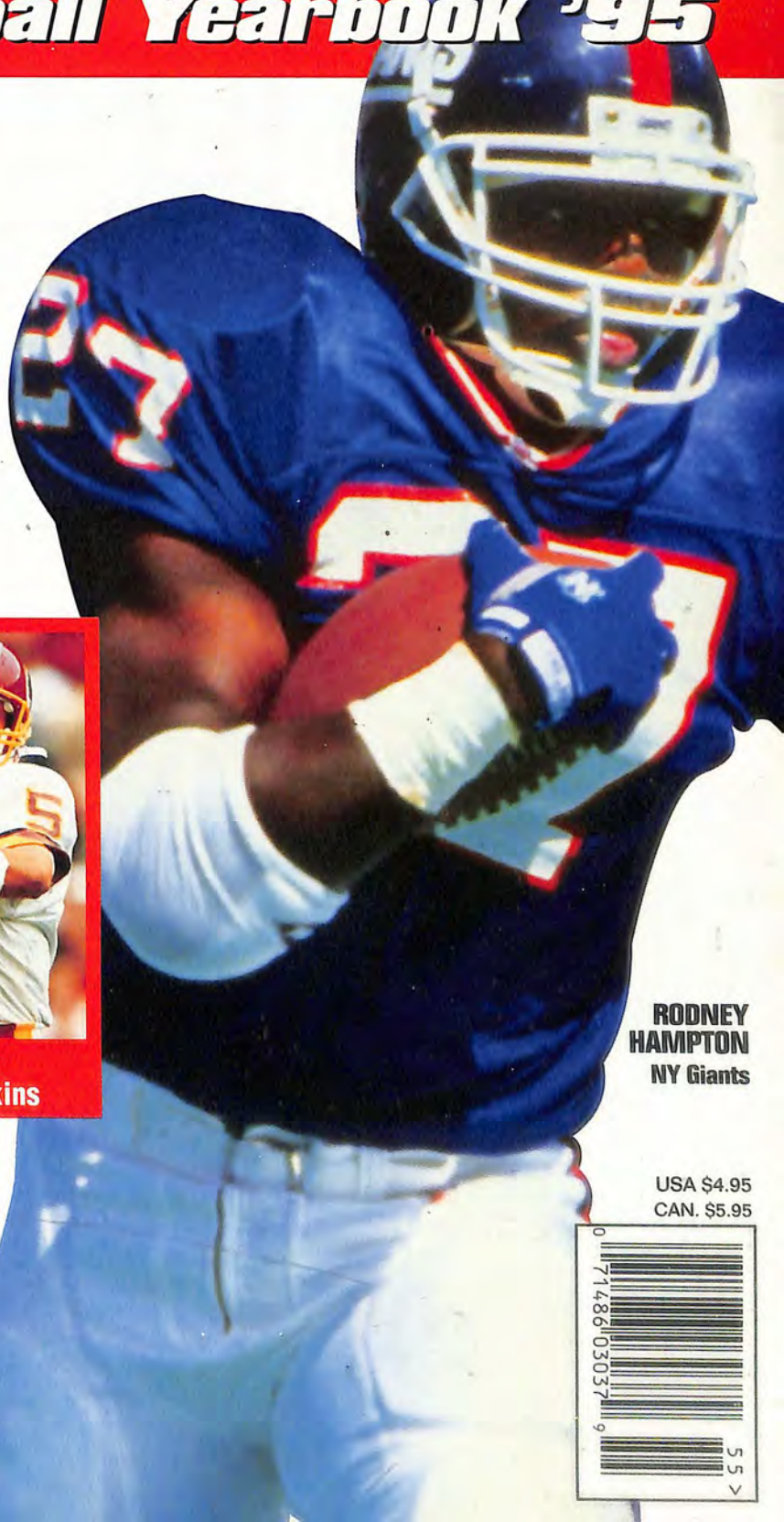
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Joe's All-Pro Teams
Position Ratings



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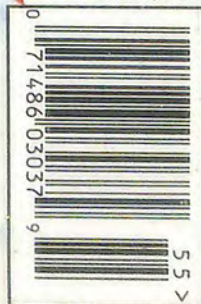
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JOE THEISMANN'S 1995 PRO FOOTBALL YEARBOOK

As a former quarterback in the NFL and current TV analyst, I spend a great deal of time studying the trends in football, trying to assess the present and forecast the future.

On first glance, all would appear to be rosy in the NFL right now. The league has expanded for the first time since 1976, adding teams in Jacksonville and Charlotte, and free agency once again allowed star players to relocate. Last year, the NFL posted record in-stadium attendance figures, introduced new rules (ie: moving kickoffs back, two-point conversion) to increase scoring, and witnessed increased TV ratings.

And while up-and-coming superstars such as Indianapolis running back Marshall Faulk and New England quarterback Drew Bledsoe have infused new excitement into the game, I'm worried that there aren't enough young stars to take over for the NFL's current group of Thirty-Something quarterbacks.

Looking at the NFL rosters as we enter the 1995 season, you'll find that 17 of the league's 30 starting QBs are 30 years old or older, and 11 top backups on those teams are 29 or older (see box).

Consider that only two starting quarterbacks — San Francisco's Steve Young and Green Bay's Brett Favre — have started all of their team's games the past two years. What you have, then, is a situation where, on any given Sunday, some of the league's marquee QBs sit injured on the sidelines while quarterbacks past their prime fill in.

Is it a major problem? We'll see in a few years when guys like Marino, Elway, Young, Kelly and Moon are ready to hang it up. Perhaps this year's new crop of quarterbacks, guys like Kerry Collins, Steve McNair and Rob Johnson, can be groomed to take over by then. And the World League can afford some QBs playing time. But I'd really like to see the NFL do something to ensure that a young prospect stays with his original team. Perhaps a five-year, "Play me, trade me, waive me," deal might work. That way, each team can take its time to develop a player before he's stolen out from under them via free agency. We need to do more to invest in the future stars of the game.

THIRTY-SOMETHING

QB AGE BREAKDOWNS

AGE	ALL	NO. 1s	BACKUPS
20-24	13	4	9
25-29	31	9	22
30-34	26	13	13
35-Over	8	4	4

TROUBLE SPOTS

The league's star QBs are getting long in the tooth. Who'll replace them when they retire?

STARTER (AGE)	TOP BACKUP
Young, S.F. (33 years old)	Grbac (25)
Kelly, Buff. (35)	Strom (30)
Elway, Den. (35)	Millen (31)
Marino, Mia. (33)	Kosar (31)
Cunningham, Phi. (32)	Peete (29)
Moon, Minn. (38)	Johnson (26)
Esiason, NYJ (34)	Brister (33)
Hostetler, L.A. (34)	Evans (40)
Everett, N.O. (32)	Wilson (36)
Humphries, S.D. (30)	Gilbert (33)

JOE THEISMANN'S PRO FOOTBALL YEARBOOK, A publication of C.S. Communications Sports Group, L.P. President: Matt Brown; Publisher: Paul Abramson; Associate Publisher: Joe Theismann; Editor: Norb Garrett; Yearbooks/Specialty Publications: Managing Editor: Bill Doherty; Senior Copy Editor: David Allen; Copy Editor: Bill Howard; Art Director: David Brenner; Production Manager: Jonathan Tesser; Controller: John Pak; Circulation Managers: Anthony Giardina, Charles Kim; Editorial Assistants: Debra L. DeSantis, Midale T. Tomas. Contributing Art Director: Joe Anderson; Contributing Editors: John Roach, David Seigerman; Advertising: VP/Associate Publisher: Gary Victor; National Accounts: David Cooper; Classified Advertising: Jessica Singer. Cover Photo of Joe Theismann courtesy ESPN. Joe Theismann's Pro Football Yearbook is published annually. Copyright 1995, C.S. Communications, L.P. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without prior written permission is prohibited. The views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of Joe Theismann or C.S. Communications, L.P. Manufactured and printed in the USA. Editorial Offices: Route 22 East, One Salem Plaza, Suite 201 E., Whitehouse Station, N.J. 08889; Advertising Offices: 15 Penn Plaza, Suite 104, New York, N.Y. 10001. ABC APPLICATION SUBMITTED

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After five Super Bowl titles, the question remains: Is it the 49ers' system or their players? *By Gordon Forbes*

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Newcomers Carolina and Jacksonville figure to receive a rough initiation into the NFL. *By Charles Chandler*

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New England's Drew Bledsoe.

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1995 NFL

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\$19^{ea} #177 (pictured below-left)



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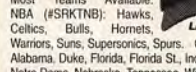
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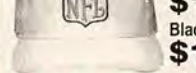
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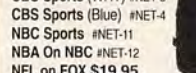
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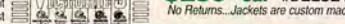
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KICKOFF '95

By **JOE THEISMANN**
and **NORB GARRETT**

It's hard to believe that the pro football season is upon us already, and, with the addition of the two expansion franchises, the National Football League will certainly have a new look. The two teams join divisions featuring some strange geographical rivalries—the Carolina Panthers will join the NFC West (along with St. Louis, Atlanta, San Francisco and New Orleans), while Jacksonville jumps into the AFC Central fray with Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Cincinnati and Houston.

Amazingly enough, though, the more things change, the more things seem to stay the same. Just as football seemed to be jumping on the “throw at all costs” bandwagon, teams are now reverting to the football of yesteryear—good old grind-it-out, shove-it-down-your-throat football. These are some of today's trends as teams continue to go back to basics:

ADIOS RUN-AND-SHOOT: After all the success teams like Dallas and San Francisco have had, I think we'll continue to see a move back to a more conventional offense: The two backs, one tight end, two wide receivers on early downs, and three wide receivers on later downs. The reason you won't see two open ends on either side of the formation is that the defensive outside rushers are just too good and you're asking your tackles to do too much.

Atlanta will be the only true run-and-shoot team left in the NFL this year. It wasn't all that long ago that the run-and-shoot was all the rage. Even longtime advocate Houston is going to abandon the true run-and-shoot and go with a more traditional set.

MOOSE ARE LOOSE: I also think you'll see the increased importance of pass-receiving fullbacks in the mold of Tom Rathman and Daryl “Moose” Johnston. Arizona's Larry Centers caught 77 passes last year.

POWER LINES: You're also seeing a defensive trend back to four down linemen away from three down linemen. Teams are feeling like they need that fourth body on the line of scrimmage to help stop the run.

QBS ON STILTS: The 6-foot-1 quarterback is almost obsolete. It's almost like you've got to be 6-2 or taller for people to even think about you. Look at Chad May (a 6-1 fourth-round draftee of the Minnesota Vikings)—you have to have exceptional talent to overcome the stigma to be considered very high.

I'll go out on a limb—you're not going to see a 6-0 quarterback be a first-round choice anymore. The linemen are just too big today, on both defense and offense.

SIZE VS. SPEED: Back in the '80s, there was a trend to go with a quick wide receiver who could get away from the jam. Today, what you've got is the bigger wide receivers who use their bodies to protect the ball from defensive backs—the Michael Irvins, the Alvin Harpers, the Sterling Sharpes. You go down the list of receivers, and everybody says that's the prototype wide receiver they want. The classic example of that is Washington head coach Norv Turner drafting wide receiver Michael Westbrook and the 49ers going after J.J. Stokes. The exception was Seattle taking Joey Galloway, but the only reason they did that is because the guy is the fastest thing on two legs known to man.

The move to bigger wide receivers is dictating the need for bigger defensive backs. You used to have those little corners like Darrell Green, who could use speed and savvy—that's why a guy like a Tyrone Poole, who's just 5-8 but has exceptional talent, is going to make it. But how suc-



No one was finer than
Steve Young and the
'Niners last season.

cessful is he going to be when you get a one-on-one jump-ball situation against someone like Irvin?

SCOUTING THE DRAFT

I was very impressed with the expansion teams' drafts. These teams went out and got players that will play for them right away. Carolina landed their quarterback of the future in Kerry Collins, but everybody else, including Tyrone Poole, Blake Brockermeyer and Shawn King, has a chance to play there.

And at Jacksonville, I know the Jaguars' top four picks [Tony Boselli, James Stewart, Brian DeMarco and Bryan Schwartz] are going to start for sure. The Jaguars are starting off with some good players.

Among other NFL teams, the trade by Cincinnati to move up for the first pick and draft Ki-Jana Carter made this a great draft for the Bengals.

Houston identified some needs not only of the future, but the present. They've had a change at the offensive coordinator spot, so they'll be doing things differently offensively, and they went out and prepared for those changes — by getting a defensive back, offensive line, wide receiver, quarter-

5 IMPACT ROOKIES

- 1 Ki-Jana Carter, Cincinnati:**
A great prospect with all the skills to make it.
- 2 Michael Westbrook, Washington:**
Big, good hands, good routes.
- 3 Warren Sapp, Tampa Bay:**
A dominating presence; he's the steal of the draft.
- 4 Tony Boselli, Jacksonville:**
A future fixture at the Pro Bowl.
- 5 Mike Mamula, Philadelphia:**
A difference-maker. Pressuring the QB is his specialty.

back — all those needs are obvious in Houston, and some of those young guys will play right away.

The Indianapolis Colts are, to me, a legitimate playoff contender right now. Marshall Faulk gave them legitimacy last year and, with this draft, the Colts have a chance at the playoffs this season. They're a little bit like the Patriots were last year. Last year, I predicted the Patriots would make the playoffs — they did, and the Patriots will go further this year — but I think the Colts also get into the playoffs this year. Plus, the acquisition of quarterback Craig Erickson is big.

The Jets also did an excellent job overall. New coach Richie Kotite has put his mark on this team — make no mistake, this team is Richie Kotite's right from the beginning. It doesn't resemble the Jets of yesteryear, or even last year. There's no question this football team will look different. Yes, I thought they needed a wide receiver, which a lot of people did. When you lose Rob Moore, you've got to figure they're going to go out and get one — Stokes was the best receiver on the board at the time, and that would have made sense. But Kyle Brady was one of the top 10 players in the draft, so how do you argue with the fact that Richie went out and got a bluechip player? I was stunned by it, but I wouldn't argue with it.

There were two teams in this year's draft — San Francisco and Cincinnati — where that

REMEMBERING JOE

We'll miss Joe Montana, without question the greatest quarterback in the history of the game.

What makes Joe so exceptional? There are so many things, but let's start with the fact that this guy was a third-round pick. Joe had a tremendous work ethic, a tremendous knowledge of the game and a tremendous fire.

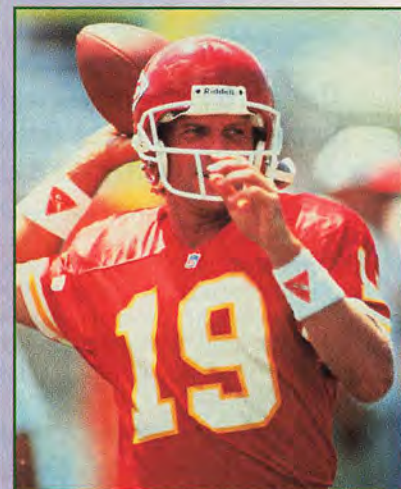
My fondest memory of Joe Montana was when I had a chance to interview him before his fourth Super Bowl. Here's a guy who was MVP of two Super Bowls prior to that one, he'd been MVP of the league, the man had won probably more than anyone in the history of football, and I sat there with him and said, "You know Joe, you've won everything you can win in this game. The Super Bowl is not a new experience to you, yet you're going to your fourth Super Bowl. You can't be scared, you can't be nervous. How are you feeling?"

And these words echo in my mind all the time. He said, "Joe, if you're not afraid to lose, then losing means nothing."

Joe Montana played football scared every day of his life, and I think for that single reason alone he achieved the greatness that he did. He was always afraid that someone would take his job. We all know about the riff between Joe and Steve Young. Joe was always afraid that Steve would take his job, and he got ticked off at San Francisco because, when Young started to play a little, it was like they'd forgotten what Joe did.

Joe coveted the quarterback position. He was passionate about it. Joe was the Mozart of football. He had a passion for the game and a love for the game that only the greats in professional football ever have.

That's what sets Joe Montana apart.



Super Joe will be missed.



Former BC Eagle Mike Mamula has landed with the Philadelphia Eagles.

KICKOFF '95

one player made the draft for them. The 49ers, of course, moved up to No. 10 in a trade with Cleveland to pick UCLA receiver J. J. Stokes, while Carter is Cincy's draft-maker.

ROBO QBs

Over the past two years, only San Francisco's Steve Young and Green Bay's Brett Favre have started each of their teams' games. That's an amazing stat. How, you might ask, have Young and Favre — two of the game's more daring running quarterbacks — stayed healthy? They understand how to protect themselves when they're in open spaces. You look at Favre and Young, and they're built near the same. They're stocky.

Why aren't more quarterbacks making it through a full season? There's a variety of reasons, but I don't think more rule changes is the answer. The league has done enough to protect quarterbacks.

Quarterbacks have to protect themselves at this stage. It's vitally important that a quarterback work out in a weight room, really get himself strong. And when you throw the football, be prepared to get hit — keep your feet moving. When you're headed out of bounds, don't slow down until you're four yards out of bounds. When you're running with the football, get down! Don't take people on one-on-one. I mean, you're going to get hit enough during the course of the season. For goodness sake, don't go looking for hits.

I don't think the league can legislate more protection for the quarterback. My advice to every QB out there today is: The league has done everything it can. Now you have to do things to protect yourself.

What quarterbacks sometimes lose sight of is their value. Everybody says, "Oh, you think you're the most important guy on the team." Well, the quarterback *is* the most important player on the team, and if you're

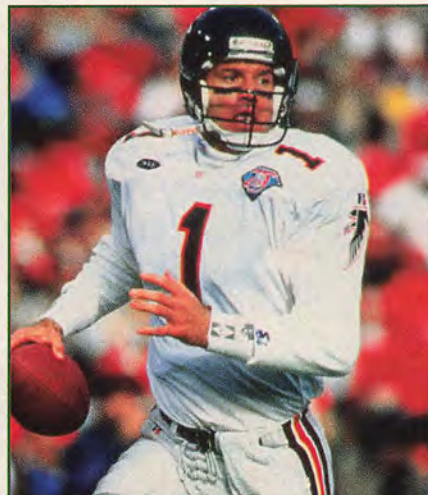


Not even Charles Haley's comet-like hits could KO Green Bay's Brett Favre.

the starting quarterback and you get hurt, there's normally a pretty good dropoff to the second-stringers. It's your responsibility as the quarterback to not only win games, but, more importantly, to practice during the week. You have to use your brain, not just to call plays — and the league has made that easier by putting microphones in the helmets. So, take the energy once used to call plays and put it into staying alive and well.

BY GEORGE

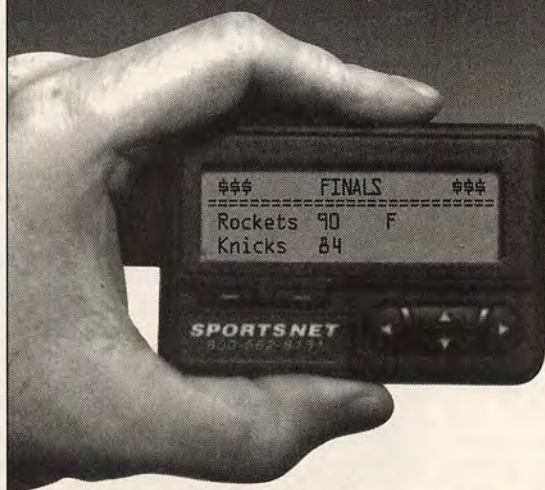
I'm very curious about Jeff George this year. The transition year is over. He left Indianapolis with a very bad taste in his mouth, from an organizational standpoint



Atlanta's Jeff George still has a lot to prove.

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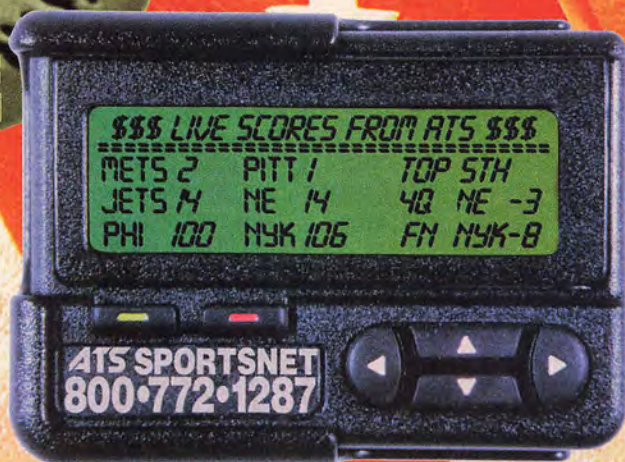
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FIRST-TEAM OFFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	TEAM	NFL EXP.	PRO BOWLS
QB	STEVE YOUNG	S.F.	10	3
RB	BARRY SANDERS	DET.	6	6
RB	EMMITT SMITH	DALL.	5	5
WR	JERRY RICE	S.F.	10	9
WR	TIM BROWN	L.A.	7	4
TE	BEN COATES	N.E.	4	1
OT	WILLIAM ROAF	N.O.	2	1
OT	RICHMOND WEBB	MIA.	5	5
OG	NATE NEWTON	DALL.	9	3
OG	RANDALL McDANIEL	MINN.	7	6
C	MARK STEPANSKI	HOU.	6	3

FIRST-TEAM DEFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	TEAM	NFL EXP.	PRO BOWLS
DT	CORTEZ KENNEDY	SEA.	5	4
DT	JOHN RANDLE	MINN.	5	2
DE	BRUCE SMITH	BUFF.	10	7
DE	LESLIE O'NEAL	S.D.	9	5
LB	DERRICK THOMAS	K.C.	6	6
LB	JUNIOR SEAU	S.D.	5	4
LB	GREG LLOYD	PITT.	8	4
CB	DEION SANDERS	F.A.	6	4
CB	AENEAS WILLIAMS	ARIZ.	4	1
S	ERIC TURNER	CLE.	4	1
S	MERTON HANKS	S.F.	4	1

FIRST-TEAM SPECIAL TEAMS

POS.	PLAYER	TEAM	NFL EXP.	PRO BOWLS
P	RICK TUTEN	SEA.	5	1
K	JOHN CARNEY	S.D.	5	1
RS	MEL GRAY	HOU.	9	4

SECOND-TEAM OFFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	TEAM	NFL EXP.	PRO BOWLS
QB	DREW BLEDSOE	N.E.	2	1
RB	MARSHALL FAULK	IND.	1	1
RB	CHRIS WARREN	SEA.	5	2
WR	CRIS CARTER	MINN.	8	2
WR	MICHAEL IRVIN	DALL.	7	4
TE	SHANNON SHARPE	DEN.	5	3
OT	LOMAS BROWN	DET.	10	5
OT	TONY BOSELLI	JACK.	0	0
OG	KEITH SIMS	MIA.	5	2
OG	BRUCE MATTHEWS	HOU.	12	7
C	DERMONTI DAWSON	PITT.	7	3

SECOND-TEAM DEFENSE

POS.	PLAYER	TEAM	NFL EXP.	PRO BOWLS
DT	CHESTER MCGLOCKTON	L.A.	3	1
DT	LEON LETT	DALL.	4	1
DE	REGGIE WHITE	G.B.	10	9
DE	NEIL SMITH	K.C.	7	4
LB	SETH JOYNER	ARIZ.	9	3
LB	CHRIS SPIELMAN	DET.	7	4
LB	KEVIN GREENE	PITT.	10	2
CB	ROD WOODSON	PITT.	8	6
CB	TERRY McDANIEL	L.A.	7	3
S	STEVE ATWATER	DEN.	6	5
S	TIM McDONALD	S.F.	8	5

SECOND-TEAM SPECIAL TEAMS

POS.	PLAYER	TEAM	NFL EXP.	PRO BOWLS
P	REGGIE ROBY	T.B.	12	3
K	FUAD REVEIZ	MINN.	10	1
RS	DAVE MEGGETT	N.E.	6	1

as well as his own. He's just happy to get out, and he goes down to Atlanta. There are a lot of people that don't want Jeff George to be successful. That's human nature.

On the other side of it, a lot of George's success will be predicated on how well Atlanta's defense does. The Falcons struggled on defense, so Jeff cannot be placed in a situation where he has to throw 45 times a game. If he has to do that in Atlanta, he'll be no more successful there than he was in Indianapolis.

FREE AGENCY

Free agency is good for the game; it has made franchises competitive right away. As a result, free agency continues to keep the interest of the fans alive. If you have the same players in the same city and you're not successful, that gets very boring for everybody.

When you have a team that falls on some hard times, like the Washington Redskins, they can go out and make some acquisitions such as James Washington and some others on defense. Or you can be like the Green Bay Packers and go out and get a Reggie White, or the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and get an Alvin Harper. And at least for that immediate year, you have the fan interest all fired up again.

Free agency has affected the draft, too, by allowing teams to make moves to get one individual they feel is a differ-

ence-maker. It used to be when you drafted 13 players, you'd expect five or six of them to hang around for three or four years and then step in.

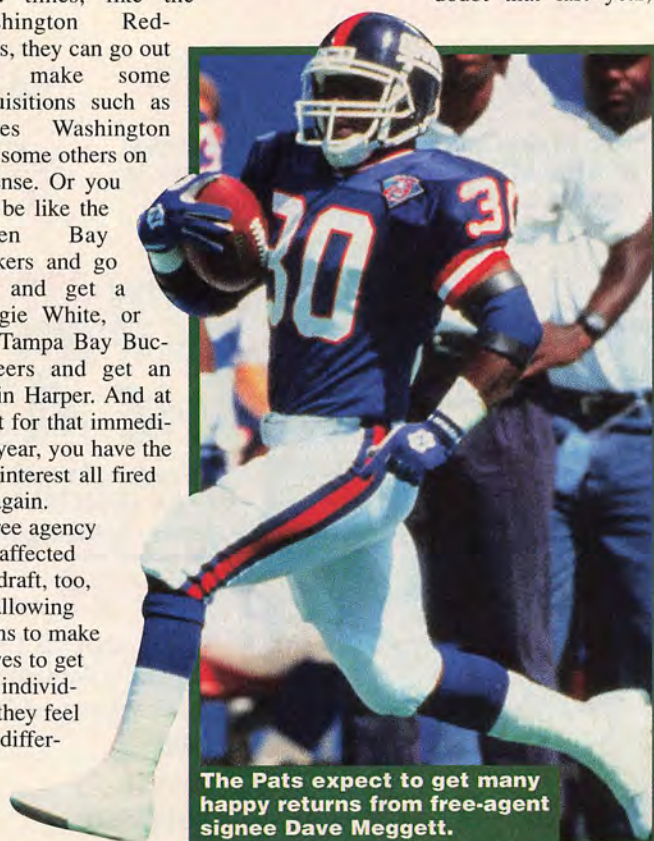
Now, you have to look for people who can play in a year or two. What San Francisco did by going out and making the deal to get J.J. Stokes in the first round of this year's draft was prepare for the inevitable turnover at wide receiver. They know John Taylor has gotten older, and they figure they can get at least three more years out of Jerry Rice. So, they looked down the road. Don't be surprised if their No. 1 pick next year isn't another wide receiver.

Dallas, however, is a perfect illustration of the other side of the coin. All Dallas did in this draft was add bodies. This is what the salary cap has done to Jerry Jones. Just as the Herschel Walker trade made the Dallas Cowboys, free agency and the salary cap are undoing the Dallas Cowboys. Just look at their defense — nine of their 11 starters are free agents after the season.

After the Cowboys won their first championship, they had 18 guys that were going to become free agents. So, they went out and signed almost all of them to three-year contracts, and now those three years have expired, or will at the end of this season.

TEAMS ON THE RISE

I think Indianapolis, Tampa Bay, Cincinnati, Washington and Houston will all be dramatically improved this year. There's no doubt that last year,



The Pats expect to get many happy returns from free-agent signee Dave Meggett.

5 TOUGHEST PLACES TO PLAY

1 GIANTS STADIUM, EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J.

The fans are really vocal, at least for the Giants. It's the loudest open-air stadium I've ever played in. RFK (in Washington, D.C.) is loud, but they were cheering for us. Plus in Giants Stadium, the winds are very unpredictable.

2 TEXAS STADIUM, IRVING, TEXAS

This place is tough because of the way the sun comes through late in the afternoon. Everybody's seen that 15-yard span of sun. If Jerry Jones, the Cowboys' owner, wants to improve the quality of Texas Stadium, he ought to at least put a window shade up.

3 THE SILVERDOME, PONTIAC, MICH.

If the Lions are playing well, there isn't a louder place in football than the Silverdome. It's very tough to communicate as a quarterback.

4 ANY ARTIFICIAL TURF STADIUM, ESPECIALLY NEW ORLEANS, PHILADELPHIA AND HOUSTON

If you talk to any player, they'll tell you they hate playing on artificial turf. On most fields, there are these large seams where your ankle can get turned. In some places, you're actually running on a hard surface, and then you hit this plywood board and it's like, "Whoa!"

5 RICH STADIUM, ORCHARD PARK, N.Y.

Especially in December. The wind is particularly a nightmare. And, by the way, if Jim Kelly didn't have to play and practice in Buffalo, his statistics would be greater than they are and his efficiency would be better. Dan Marino has a distinct advantage over Jim Kelly because of weather. The wind in Buffalo is like throwing into a wall; the wind in Miami is like throwing through a feather pillow. Jim will kid Dan all the time that when he comes down to Miami to play, he feels like a new person; he's rejuvenated and his arm feels great.

when you looked on your team's schedule and you saw these teams, you'd say "OK, that's a win."

Now when you line up against these teams, you better not be entertaining the thought that you should beat them. You're going to *have* to beat them. And I mean the Cowboys and the 49ers and the Steelers — those teams had better line up and be ready to play. There are no patsies in this game anymore, and here's why:

INDIANAPOLIS: Marshall Faulk is truly something special. He is already considered among the game's superstar backs. The addition of quarterback Craig Erickson from Tampa Bay was a great move.

HOUSTON: When the Oilers decided to go with a combination run-and-shoot and tight end offense last year, they really sealed

their own fate for the season. Now, they have a singular direction.

WASHINGTON: A strong draft and successful free agency moves give the Redskins positive momentum.

CINCINNATI: All of a sudden, this team can be competitive with a running game to stretch defenses.

TAMPA BAY: The lowly Bucs made a commitment to Trent Dilfer, grabbed Alvin Harper in free agency and snared Warren Sapp. Look out.

LOTS OF MOVES, LOTS OF CHANGES

One of the things that gets ignored a lot in pro football is the job of the assistant coaches — particularly the coordinators. There have been more coordinator changes this year than any other year, so what you're talking about is substantial changes of philosophy.

Let's take Monty Kiffin down in New Orleans. The Saints traditionally have been a 3-4 team defensively — three down linemen, four linebackers. Monte comes out of Minnesota where they use the 4-3 — four down linemen and three backers. So, you're basically going to get an entirely different-looking defense.

Jerry Rhome is going into Houston, and the Oilers are going to get away from the run-and-shoot and go to a more conventional offense.

Look at the two guys in San Francisco — Marc Trestman takes over the offense and Pete Carroll takes over the defense. But I guess you could ask, what can Marc do to the San Francisco offense to make it any better? Who knows, but lots of guys have used that position as a springboard to head-coaching jobs.

Look at Dallas. They've got a new defensive coordinator for the third straight year. First it was Dave Wannstedt, who moved on to Chicago to take the head coaching job. Then it was Butch Davis, who left this year to take the head coaching job at the University of Miami. Now it's Dave



Carl Pickens and the Bengals are no longer easy pickings.

Campo. There's no way that you can expect a team to remain good with that kind of change. You might have many of the same players, but there's no consistency. Everybody talks about consistency, but what is very important is consistency in the assistant coaching ranks.

The problem is, the more successful your team is, the more likely it is you'll lose a good assistant coach. Look at the owners. Now, they go out and get somebody right away (see The Coaching Ladder chart, below). They're looking for coordinators who can make a difference, guys like Mike Shanahan, who was the offensive coordinator at San Francisco, or Ray Rhodes, who was the defensive coordinator of the 49ers.

What you'll see more and more is owners looking to hire the assistants instead of recycling head coaches to other teams. Look at a guy like Jerry Glanville — he can't get a job.

THE COACHING LADDER

Assistant coaches who've been named head coaches in the '90s:

NAME

Dom Capers
Jeff Fisher
Ray Rhodes
Mike Shanahan
Mike White
June Jones
Norv Turner
Bill Cowher
Dave Wannstedt
Bill Belichick
Mike Holmgren
David Shula

TEAM/YR. HIRED

Carolina/1995
Houston/1995
Philadelphia/1995
Denver/1995
L.A. Raiders/1995
Atlanta/1994
Washington/1994
Pittsburgh/1993
Chicago/1993
Cleveland/1992
Green Bay/1992
Cincinnati/1992

FORMER TEAM/TITLE

Pittsburgh/Defensive Coordinator
Houston/Defensive Coordinator
San Francisco/Defensive Coordinator
San Francisco/Offensive Coordinator
L.A. Raiders/Offensive Coordinator
Atlanta/Offensive Coordinator
Dallas/Offensive Coordinator
Kansas City/Defensive Coordinator
Dallas/Defensive Coordinator
N.Y. Giants/Defensive Coordinator
San Francisco/Offensive Coordinator
Miami/Quarterbacks Coach

TV GAMES TO WATCH

WEEK ONE

Sept. 3 (Sun) San Francisco at New Orleans, 1 (FOX)*
San Diego at Los Angeles, 4 (NBC)
Buffalo at Denver, 8 (TNT)
Sept. 4 (Mon) Dallas at N.Y. Giants, 9 (ABC)

WEEK TWO

Sept. 10 (Sun) Detroit at Minnesota, 1 (FOX)
Miami at New England, 1 (NBC)*
Philadelphia at Arizona, 8 (TNT)
Sept. 11 (Mon) Green Bay at Chicago, 9 (ABC)

WEEK THREE

Sept. 17 (Sun) N.Y. Giants at Green Bay, 1 (FOX)
New England at San Francisco, 4 (NBC)*
Dallas at Minnesota, 8 (TNT)
Sept. 18 (Mon) Pittsburgh at Miami, 9 (ABC)

WEEK FOUR

Sept. 24 (Sun) Minnesota at Pittsburgh, 1 (FOX)*
Denver at San Diego, 4 (NBC)
Green Bay at Jacksonville, 8 (TNT)
Sept. 25 (Mon) San Francisco at Detroit, 9 (ABC)

WEEK FIVE

Oct. 1 (Sun) N.Y. Giants at San Francisco, 4 (FOX)
San Diego at Pittsburgh, 4 (NBC)*
Los Angeles at N.Y. Jets, 8 (TNT)
Oct. 2 (Mon) Buffalo at Cleveland, 9 (ABC)

(All listings Eastern time); *denotes network with doubleheader

WEEK SIX

Oct. 8 (Sun) Green Bay at Dallas, 1 (FOX)
Indianapolis at Miami, 4 (NBC)*
Denver at New England, 8 (TNT)
Oct. 9 (Mon) San Diego at Kansas City, 9 (ABC)

WEEK SEVEN

Oct. 12 (Thu) Atlanta at St. Louis, 8 (TNT)
Oct. 15 (Sun) Dallas at San Diego, 4 (FOX)*
Miami at New Orleans, 4 (NBC)
Oct. 16 (Mon) Los Angeles at Denver, 9 (ABC)

WEEK EIGHT

Oct. 19 (Thu) Cincinnati at Pittsburgh, 8 (TNT)
Oct. 22 (Sun) Minnesota at Green Bay, 1 (FOX)
Miami at N.Y. Jets, 1 (NBC)*
Oct. 23 (Mon) Buffalo at New England, 9 (ABC)

WEEK NINE

Oct. 29 (Sun) Dallas at Atlanta, 1 (FOX)*
Buffalo at Miami, 4 (NBC)
N.Y. Giants at Washington, 8 (TNT)
Oct. 30 (Mon) Chicago at Minnesota, 9 (ABC)

WEEK 10

Nov. 5 (Sun) Green Bay at Minnesota, 1 (FOX)
Pittsburgh at Chicago, 4 (NBC)*
Miami at San Diego, 8 (ESPN)
Nov. 6 (Mon) Philadelphia at Dallas, 9 (ABC)

WEEK 11

Nov. 12 (Sun) New England at Miami, 1 (NBC)

San Francisco at Dallas, 4 (FOX)*
Denver at Philadelphia, 8 (ESPN)
Nov. 13 (Mon) Cleveland at Pittsburgh, 9 (ABC)

WEEK 12

Nov. 19 (Sun) Dallas at Los Angeles, 4 (FOX)*
San Diego at Denver, 4 (NBC)
Houston at Kansas City, 8 (ESPN)
Nov. 20 (Mon) San Francisco at Miami, 9 (ABC)

WEEK 13

Nov. 23 (Thanksgiving) Minnesota at Detroit, 12:30 (FOX); Kansas City at Dallas, 4 (NBC)
Nov. 26 (Sun) Chicago at N.Y. Giants, 1 (FOX)
Pittsburgh at Cleveland, 4 (NBC)*
Carolina at New Orleans, 8 (ESPN)
Nov. 27 (Mon) Los Angeles at San Diego, 9 (ABC)

WEEK 14

Nov. 30 (Thu) N.Y. Giants at Arizona, 8 (ESPN)
Dec. 3 (Sun) Washington at Dallas, 4 (FOX)*
Cleveland at San Diego, 4 (NBC)
Buffalo at San Francisco, 8 (ESPN)
Dec. 4 (Mon) Chicago at Detroit, 9 (ABC)

WEEK 15

Dec. 9 (Sat) Cleveland at Minnesota, 12:30 (NBC)
Arizona at San Diego, 4 (FOX)
Dec. 10 (Sun) Dallas at Philadelphia, 1 (FOX)
Pittsburgh at Los Angeles, 4 (NBC)*
Green Bay at Tampa Bay, 8 (ESPN)
Dec. 11 (Mon) Kansas City at Miami, 9 (ABC)

WEEK 16

Dec. 16 (Sat) New England at Pittsburgh, 12:30 (NBC)
Green Bay at New Orleans, 4 (FOX)
Dec. 17 (Sun) Miami at Buffalo, 1 (NBC)
N.Y. Giants at Dallas, 4 (FOX)*
Los Angeles at Seattle, 8 (ESPN)
Dec. 18 (Mon) Minnesota at San Francisco, 9 (ABC)

WEEK 17

Dec. 23 (Sat) San Diego at N.Y. Giants, 12:30 (NBC)
Detroit at Tampa Bay, 4 (FOX)
New England at Indianapolis, 8 (ESPN)
Dec. 24 (Sun) Philadelphia at Chicago, 1 (FOX)
Pittsburgh at Green Bay, 1 (NBC)*
Dec. 25 (Mon) Dallas at Arizona, 9 (ABC)

PLAYOFFS

Dec. 30 (Sat) AFC, NFC Wild Card Games (ABC)
Dec. 31 (Sun) NFC Wild Card Game (FOX)
AFC Wild Card Game (NBC)
Jan. 6 (Sat) NFC Divisional Playoff Game (FOX)
AFC Divisional Playoff Game (NBC)
Jan. 7 (Sun) NFC Divisional Playoff Game (FOX)
AFC Divisional Playoff Game (NBC)
Jan. 14 (Sun) NFC Championship Game (FOX)
AFC Championship Game (NBC)
Jan. 28 (Sun) Super Bowl XXX (NBC)
Feb. 4 (Sun) Pro Bowl (ABC)

BROADCAST VIEWS

(Some of Joe's observations from the broadcast booth)

- In every game, each team should be required to run either one fake punt or fake field goal.
- I still think the officials have to do a better job of enforcing the no-chuck rule, where, after five yards, defensive backs can't use their hands.
- I'm all for celebrations, but I'd like to see a rule like one the NCAA just passed where kids must leave their helmets on.
- At first, I didn't like the two-point rule, but now I do — it's exciting.
- When a defensive player comes in and tries to swat a ball away from the quarterback's hand and just grazes the quarterback's head, I don't like to see a 15-yard penalty. I think the refs should do a better job with discretion on blows to the head.
- If a player is caught abusing substances three times, I would like to see him banned for life from the game. Not the phrase that's used now — life, pending review. To me, to play professional athletics is a privilege, and if you have a problem — that means that you've abused substances three times — the game is not a priority to you; you should clean your life up. You don't deserve the privilege to play professional football — or pro sports in general.
- The AFC still does not have a dominant team that can knock off the NFC's best.
- Abolish artificial turf. Every field should be a grass field. I understand multi-use stadiums where you have baseball and football, but to me, I think the players much prefer grass. Let me tell you something, the knees and the ankles take such a tremendous beating on turf. The only thing I can say to people is just go out and stand in a parking lot for three hours and see if your back doesn't hurt. That's all artificial turf is — it's a little bit of a surface on a parking lot.

Glanville's out there, but ownership is looking for a younger, successful coordinator — like when Mike Holmgren took over the Green Bay Packers and Dennis Green took over the Minnesota Vikings.

There are a handful of current assistant coaches who've been mentioned in recent openings who are likely to be considered in the future: Minnesota defensive coordinator Tony Dungy, Washington's quarterbacks coach Cam Cameron and San Francisco's Marc Trestman.

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS

Who would ever believe that you would hear the name Art Shell associated with the Kansas City Chiefs? After six years as the head coach of the arch-rival Los Angeles Raiders, Shell moves over as an assistant coach at K.C.

One thing about Art Shell: He's a great man with great character. He was one of the greatest offensive linemen in the history of pro football. He brings tradition, knowledge, and when Art speaks, those guys are going to listen.

LIFE AT ESPN

There are two questions I get asked all the time: No. 1, "How's your leg?" and No. 2, "What's Chris Berman really like?"

First, the leg's fine, but I wouldn't want to be timed in the 40. Second there isn't a more fun individual that I could imagine working with than Chris Berman at ESPN. Chris will continually say, "I never played the game, I never played the game," but you know there's a love and enthusiasm that goes out throughout the television set. Chris is just like everybody sees

him. He's a man that loves the game of football — he's bright, he's witty and he knows how to communicate those attributes to the fans. Sometimes when we're on the set of *NFL Gameday* or *PrimeTime*, we can't script it — because we don't know what's coming out.

People will say to us all the time, "You guys really look like you're having fun. There's no way you could rehearse that." And you're right, we don't sometimes. We'll spend five hours in a meeting on Saturday to get ready for our shows on Sunday, but when the show starts, it could go in an entirely different direction than the meeting called for.

When we start our show at noon on Sunday, sometimes your guess is as good as mine as to what's going on. But we will guarantee one thing — nobody will give you football better than ESPN does, — whether it's *PrimeTime*, *NFL Sunday Night*, or *NFL Gameday*. That's our promise to the fans. **JT**



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Sincerely, Bob Hurley Sr.

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Steve Spurrier

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NFL POSITION RANKINGS

DEFENSIVE LINEMEN

They are hunters: Relentless, determined, hungry and feared. Defensive linemen get to do what all predators live for — seek and destroy. Those who refine the hunt to an art form live in infamy. You know the names: Minnesota's Alan Page, Baltimore's Gino Marchetti, the Rams' Merlin Olsen and the Jets' Mark Gastineau. Make sure you add Green Bay's Reggie White to your list.

White, otherwise known as "The Minister of Defense," is the NFL's all-time sacks leader with 145 career quarterback sacks in 153 games. Combining brute strength and speed, White has helped transform the Packers defense into one of the league's best, and, at age 33, seems to get better every year. His prowess is well-documented, forcing offenses to double- and triple-team him regularly. While his numbers in 1994 were un-Reggie-like: eight sacks, 50 tackles, seven passes defended, two forced fumbles), his impact never waned. As offenses concentrated on White, linemate Sean Jones racked up a team-high 10.5 sacks, veteran Steve McMichael added 2.5 and Gilbert Brown registered three.

Who else in the league forces offenses to script individual game plans around them? Start in Buffalo with Bruce Smith. Fearless and huge (6-4, 273), Smith was the defensive cornerstone during Buffalo's four unsuccessful forays into the Super Bowl. How about Kansas City's Neil Smith, a maniacal pass-rusher who last year accounted for 11.5 sacks? San Diego's Leslie O'Neal posted 12.5 sacks last year, helping the upstart Chargers advance to the Super Bowl. And this year, perhaps for the very last season, Dallas' Charles Haley will write another chapter in the how-to manual of wreaking havoc in opposing backfields.

Who's the best? History will tell, but for now Reggie rules the roost.



The Minister of Defense is still handing out lessons every Sunday.

RK./NAME	TEAM	YRS. PRO	HT./WT.	NOTES
1. Reggie White	G.B.	11	6-5/295	Last year's 8-sack season broke a string of nine straight with 10 or more.
2. Bruce Smith	Buff.	11	6-4/273	His sack totals have dropped since '90, but Bruuuuce is still the man.
3. Charles Haley	Dall.	10	6-5/255	He decided not to retire, which is bad news for NFC quarterbacks.
4. Leslie O'Neal	S.D.	10	6-4/265	Combined with Chris Mims to jolt opposing QBs 23.5 times.
5. Cortez Kennedy	Sea.	6	6-3/293	Dennis Erickson's arrival should make Kennedy a Hurricane force again.
6. John Randle	Minn.	6	6-1/272	A repeat of '94 (13.5 sacks) won't come easy without Henry Thomas.
7. Neil Smith	K.C.	8	6-4/273	Teamed with Derrick Thomas for 22.5 sacks, 79 QB pressures in '94.
8. Chester McGlockton	L.A.	4	6-4/310	McGlockton (9.5 sacks, 3 forced fumbles) is a real up-and-comer.
9. Eric Swann	Ariz.	5	6-5/295	Swann (7 sacks, 23 tackles for a loss) has many Pro Bowls in his future.
10. Leon Lett	Dall.	5	6-6/288	He's survived the "Turkey Play" and "Super Bowl Blunder" very well.
11. Michael Dean Perry	Den.	8	6-1/285	The Broncos are happy Cleveland and the expansionists didn't want him.
12. Dana Stubblefield	S.F.	3	6-2/302	The 49ers are set at tackle for years to come with him and Bryant Young.
13. Sean Gilbert	St.L.	4	6-4/315	Should fit right in with the Gateway Arch in St. Louis.
14. Chris Zorich	Chi.	5	6-1/280	The mark of Zorich (104 tackles, 5.5 sacks) was felt often last season.
15. Tim Bowers	Mia.	2	6-4/310	AFC Defensive Rookie of the Year is a superb run-stuffer.

1995 NFL POSITION RANKINGS

LINEBACKERS

There isn't a more appropriately named player in the NFL than San Diego linebacker Junior Seau. Just ask anyone who's tried to take on Say-Ow head-on — the pronunciation of his surname perfectly matches his prowess. He pursues opposing ballcarriers with an intensity that makes the Tasmanian Devil look lethargic, and, when he arrives at his target, he unleashes his chiseled 6-foot-3, 250-pound frame in the NFL's most devastating package of speed and strength.

Six years out of Southern Cal, Seau has emerged as the league's premier defender. In 1994, he showed an ability to rush the quarterback (note his career-high 5.5 sacks) equal to his knack for tracking and tackling. Of the career-high 155 tackles Seau made last season in leading the Chargers to their first Super Bowl appearance, 124 were solo stops.

Just imagine if he had been healthy. Seau played the final third of the season, including San Diego's entire playoff run, with a severely pinched nerve in his left shoulder. Time and again, he would emerge from a tackle with one arm draped at his side. Still, in one of the biggest victories in franchise history — a 17-13 road win over Pittsburgh in the AFC Championship game — Seau was his usual relentless self, registering a game-high 16 tackles as San Diego held the Steelers to a meager 66 rushing yards.

That game may have been the defining moment of what projects to be a Hall of Fame career, an afternoon of selfless determination that inspired his teammates to pull off the upset. But it wasn't even his most productive game of the 1994 season. In a 35-15 dismantling of Seattle in Week 8, he made a career-high 19 tackles and picked up a sack, showing the world what to expect from a healthy Junior Seau.



Despite a pinched nerve in his left shoulder, San Diego's Junior Seau registered a career-high 155 tackles last season.

RK./NAME	TEAM	YRS. PRO	HT./WT.	NOTES
1. Derrick Thomas	K.C.	7	6-3/247	The closest thing to LT. Forced six fumbles last year and had 11 sacks.
2. Junior Seau	S.D.	6	6-3/250	"Say OW." Racked up 155 tackles despite a nagging shoulder injury.
3. Greg Lloyd	Pitt.	9	6-2/226	Lloyd (91 tackles, 10 sacks) isn't a guy you want to see coming on a blitz.
4. Seth Joyner	Ariz.	10	6-2/235	A disruptive force (86 tackles, 6 sacks, 3 INTs) in Buddy Ryan's "46" 'D.'
5. Bryan Cox	Mia.	5	6-4/248	Cox (147 tackles) is the last guy you want to tick off.
6. Chris Spielman	Det.	8	6-0/247	He racks up tackles (195) like Barry Sanders does yards.
7. Ken Norton Jr.	S.F.	8	6-2/241	Owens more titles (three straight Super Bowl wins) than his father.
8. Kevin Greene	Pitt.	11	6-3/247	Won the sack title last season with 14 in his 10th pro season.
9. Michael Brooks	NYG	9	6-1/235	Another Giant among linebackers for the Big Blue.
10. Ken Harvey	Wash.	8	6-2/245	See Lloyd. Tied for the NFC lead in sacks (13.5) last season.
11. Cornelius Bennett	Buff.	9	6-2/238	Bills' "franchise" player has recovered 16 fumbles in his career.
12. Chris Slade	N.E.	3	6-4/232	With Slade and Willie McGinest, there's not even enough room for LT.
13. Hardy Nickerson	T.B.	9	6-2/228	Try to picture the Steelers' LBs with Nickerson (122 tackles) still aboard.
14. Mo Lewis	NYJ	5	6-3/250	Led all LBs with 4 interceptions last year (two for TDs) and had 6 sacks.
15. Jessie Tuggle	All.	9	5-11/230	Was five tackles shy of posting his third 200-tackle season since 1990.

1995 NFL POSITION RANKINGS

DEFENSIVE BACKS

When you take away the bandanna, the jewelry, the smiles for the camera and the showboating that usually accompanies his interception returns, Deion Sanders is still the best defensive back in the league.

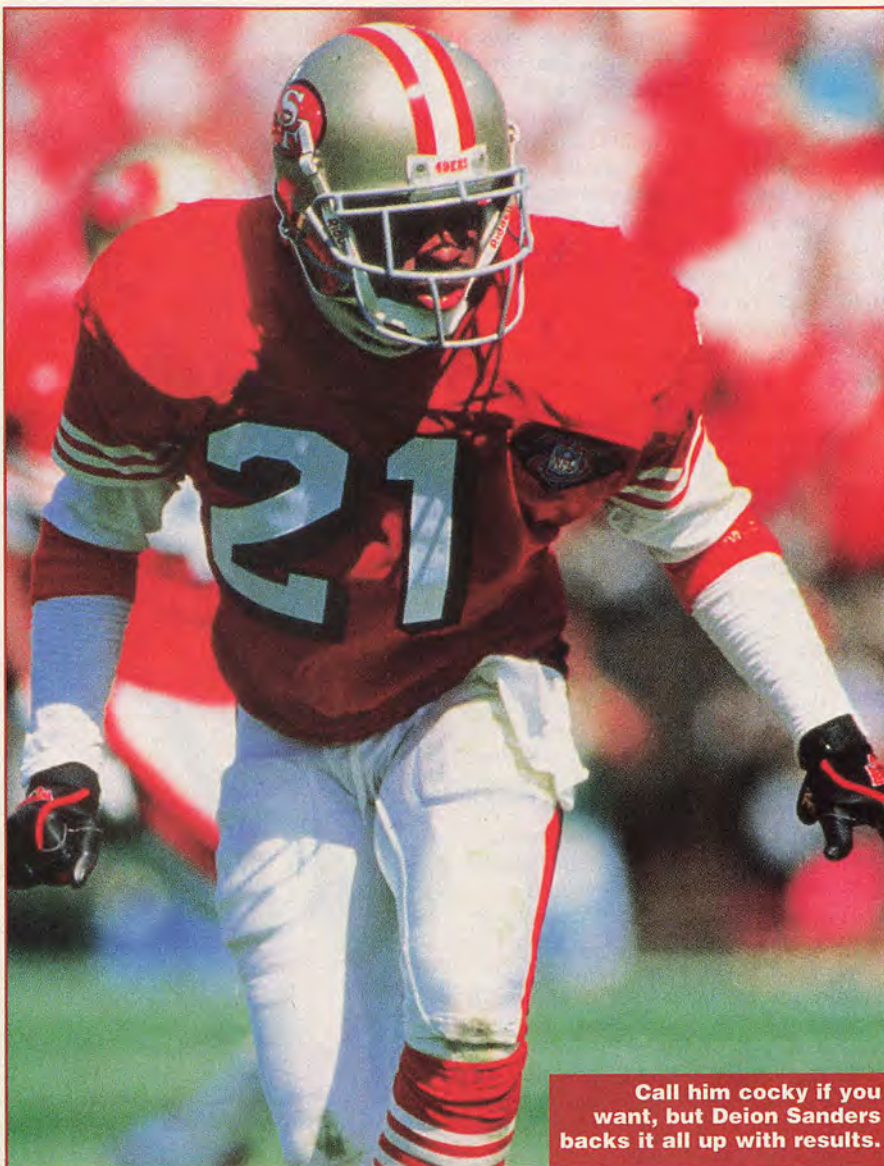
The part-time football player with "Prime Time" skills, Sanders took both his game and exposure to new levels while helping the San Francisco 49ers to the Super Bowl last season. His numbers were as outrageous as his touchdown dances: Six interceptions for 303 yards (yes, a whopping 50.5-yard average) and three touchdowns.

After a triumphant return to Atlanta, which included a spectacular 93-yard touchdown dance down the right sideline, the two-sport star (he's also an outfielder for the Cincinnati Reds) caught some flack when he claimed the Georgia Dome "will always be my house," but he had good reason to boast so: He was the only Falcon in team history to return a kickoff, punt and interception for touchdowns.

San Francisco knew they had a gem in Sanders the moment he first took the field for the 'Niners (Week 4 against New Orleans), when he recorded eight tackles and clinched a 24-13 win with a 74-yard interception return for a touchdown. From there, it only got better, with 37 total tackles and 15 passes defended in 13 regular-season games. In the 49ers' opening playoff game against Chicago in the NFC Divisional semifinals, Sanders' presence prompted the Bears not to throw one pass in his direction.

Whether Sanders will test the free-agency waters after winning a Super Bowl ring was still in the air during the spring, but he had owners scrambling for ways to fit him under the salary cap.

Love him or hate him for his antics, Sanders strikes more fear into opposing quarterbacks than any other player at his position, hands down.



Call him cocky if you want, but Deion Sanders backs it all up with results.

RK./NAME	TEAM	YRS. PRO	HT./WT.	NOTES
1. Deion Sanders	FA*	6	6-1/185	Mr. Excitement. Returned six INTs for 303 yards and three TDs.
2. Eric Allen	N.O.	8	5-10/180	Saints thought highly enough of him to pay him \$14 million over 5 years.
3. Rod Woodson	Pitt.	9	6-0/200	Another CB with big-play ability (4 INTS, 2 TDs, 3 sacks in '94).
4. Eric Turner	Cle.	5	6-1/207	The best safety in the game; tied for NFL lead with nine INTs last season.
5. Aeneas Williams	Ariz.	5	5-10/190	Nine INTs helped Cards tie for the NFL lead with 23.
6. Steve Atwater	Den.	7	6-3/217	The hits keep coming from Atwater, who made his 5th straight Pro Bowl.
7. Terry McDaniel	L.A.	8	5-10/180	Always around the ball (7 INTs, 22 passes defended, 3 fumble recoveries).
8. Ray Buchanan	Ind.	3	5-9/193	A real surprise last season for the Colts; returned 3 of his 8 INTs for TDs.
9. Darren Woodson	Dall.	4	6-1/215	His 94-yard INT return pretty much sealed the Eagles' collapse last year.
10. Carnell Lake	Pitt.	7	6-1/210	Hard-hitting safety (3 forced fumbles) on NFL's hardest-hitting 'D.'
11. Dale Carter	K.C.	4	6-1/188	Three ex-Jets and a Pro Bowler. Carter (94 tackles) is K.C.'s mainstay.
12. Tim McDonald	S.F.	9	6-2/215	Five-time Pro Bowler may not be playing for 49ers when season starts.
13. Kevin Smith	Dall.	4	5-11/184	Has started every game in his first three seasons with the Cowboys.
14. Leroy Butler	G.B.	6	6-0/197	Battled case of pneumonia last season but still wound up with three INTs.
15. Merton Hanks	S.F.	5	6-2/185	Had 7 INTs in '94, two in Super Bowl of regular-season games vs. Dallas.

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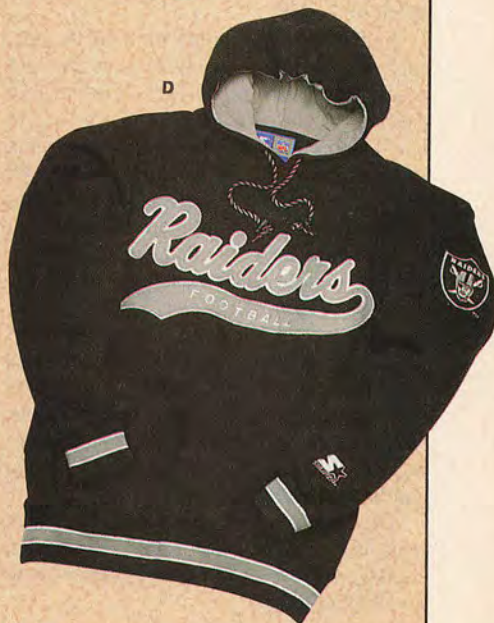
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1995 NFL POSITION RANKINGS

QUARTERBACKS

If he were to be judged solely by what his right arm has accomplished, there would be no way to deny Dan Marino the honor of Greatest Quarterback of All-Time. Unfortunately, history has a way of focusing on a player's ring finger, and Marino's is still unadorned. One piece of jewelry — albeit a coveted, gaudy trinket — is all that stands between Marino and his rightful legacy. Until he gets that gold band for his finger, there's not much more his golden right arm can do.

After all, he is on the verge of breaking every significant passing record in the NFL register. With a typical season, Marino will surpass Fran Tarkenton for the top spot in career attempts, completions, passing yards and touchdowns. And Dan will have needed five fewer seasons than Fran to put up better numbers than anyone to let loose a spiral in the NFL.

And there's absolutely nothing to indicate that Marino is ready to start slowing down. His 1994 numbers — 385-of-615 passing (62.6 percent), 4,453 yards, 30 touchdowns — were among the best of his Hall of Fame career, and they were even more impressive considering Marino's status was uncertain after recovering from a torn Achilles' tendon that forced him to miss most of the 1993 season. Last year was his 11th season of at least 20 touchdowns (an NFL record) and his 10th 3,000-yard season (yet another record), all of which was accomplished while leading the Dolphins to the AFC semifinals. And, he engineered four fourth-quarter comebacks, raising his career total to 29 — one fewer than Joe Montana and five behind John Elway.

The numbers are undeniable. But there remains that one ultimate victory — a singular, elusive achievement that could stamp Marino for all of posterity.



Dan Marino's gaudy portfolio still lacks one major item: A Super Bowl ring.

RK./NAME	TEAM	YRS. PRO	HT./WT.	NOTES
1. Steve Young	S.F.	11	6-2/205	Finally out of Joe's shadow.
2. Dan Marino	Mia.	13	6-4/224	Big fish (45,173 career passing yards) in a small pond of talented QBs.
3. Drew Bledsoe	N.E.	3	6-5/233	The biggest thing to come out of Walla Walla, Wash.
4. John Elway	Den.	13	6-3/215	Has to love throwing to likes of Sharpe, Miller and Pritchard.
5. Troy Aikman	Dall.	7	6-4/228	Didn't miss a third straight Super Bowl title by much.
6. Brett Favre	G.B.	5	6-2/222	Breakout season in '94 with 33 TDs, 14 INTs.
7. Warren Moon	Minn.	12	6-3/219	Led NFC with 4,264 passing yards last season.
8. Jim Kelly	Buff.	10	6-3/224	Owns eight seasons of 3,000 or more yards passing.
9. Jeff George	Atl.	6	6-4/215	How will he fare without Andre Rison?
10. Stan Humphries	S.D.	7	6-3/223	Lightning could strike twice for Chargers if he stays healthy.
11. Rick Mirer	Sea.	3	6-2/211	Interception percentage was lowest in the NFL last season.
12. Jim Everett	N.O.	10	6-5/212	No more Chrissy Evert jokes after last season's performance.
13. Jeff Hostetler	L.A.	12	6-3/215	Just throw, baby, and watch fleet corps of WRs run under it.
14. Randall Cunningham	Phi.	11	6-4/205	Addition of Watters, subtraction of Kotite should help.
15. Neil O'Donnell	Pitt.	6	6-3/230	Came within three yards of going to the Super Bowl.

\$50,000 in Prizes - 1 in 20 Win!

INSIDE
SPORTS

Grand Prizes

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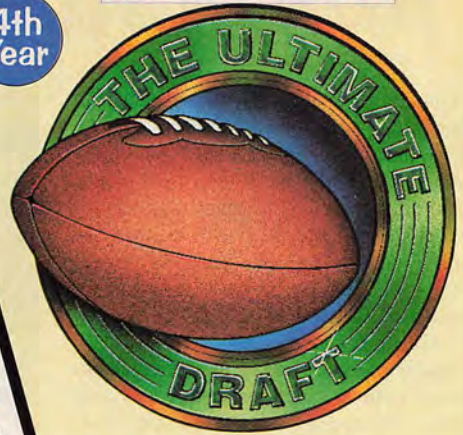
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Year



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Make ONE (1) selection from each of the 9 groups. Contestants with the highest scores based on their best 13 of 17 weeks will be grand prize winners (your 4 lowest weeks are dropped).

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You'll receive 6 updates for each entry. Your first update (received during the week of Sept. 18) will include your player selections, scoring page, trading worksheet, hotline details for trading and weekly updates plus contest rules.

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Sat., Sept. 2
(postmarked or faxed)

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Offensive Scoring (Group 01 to 08)

Yds Passing...a full 25 yds = 1 pt
Yds Rushing...a full 10 yds = 1 pt
Yds Receiving...a full 10 yds = 1 pt
Two Point Conversion... 2 pts (passed, rushed or received)
Receptions... 1 pt
TD Pass... 6 pts
TD Scored... 6 pts
Field Goals... 5 pts
Extra Points... 1 pt

NOTE: Players earn points for TDs scored on a kick-off or punt return but not for return yardage.

Defensive Scoring (Group 09)

Fumble Recoveries... 2 pts
Interceptions... 2 pts
Safeties... 2 pts
Sacks... 1 pt
TD Scored... 6 pts (does not include kickoff or punt returns)
Points Allowed
0 - 2 ... 20 pts
3 - 6 ... 15 pts
7 - 13 ... 10 pts
14 - 20 ... 5 pts

IMPORTANT: Players earn points for any stats they are credited with - whether it be for passing, rushing, receiving or kicking - regardless of the position they play. Points are awarded on a game by game basis.



More Trades

New Starting Tues, Sept. 19, call the Ultimate Draft hotline to trade players and/or hear your current point total and rank (regular long distance charges apply). Key trading details:
1. You can now make 7 calls and make up to 3 trades each time (maximum 1 trading call per week).
2. Trades must be made within the same Group.
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- League standings will be including on each team update.

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Make ONE selection from each group.

Player Points (PTS) are based on 1994 statistics using the Ultimate Draft scoring system. Due to publishing deadlines, team designations may not reflect recent changes.

QB (01)	TEAM GP PTS.	QB (02)	TEAM GP PTS.	RB (03)	TEAM GP PTS.	RB (04)	TEAM GP PTS.	REC (05)	TEAM GP PTS.
1 ☐ Bledsoe NE 16 336		1 ☐ T. Aikman DAL 14 197		1 ☐ K-J. Carter CIN - Rookie -		1 ☐ T. Allen MIN 16 185		1 ☐ T. Brown LA 16 274	
2 ☐ R. Cunningham PHI 14 272		2 ☐ D. Brown NYG 15 205		2 ☐ M. Faulk IND 16 304		2 ☐ E. Bennett GB 16 249		2 ☐ C. Carter MIN 16 294	
3 ☐ J. Elway DEN 14 287		3 ☐ J. Hostetler LA 16 281		3 ☐ B. Foster PIT 11 148		3 ☐ J. Bettis STL 16 191		3 ☐ B. Coates NE 16 255	
4 ☐ J. Everett NO 16 294		4 ☐ S. Humphries SD 15 234		4 ☐ N. Means SD 16 270		4 ☐ G. Brown HOU 12 132		4 ☐ M. Irvin DAL 16 239	
5 ☐ B. Favre GB 16 387		5 ☐ J. Kelly BUF 14 270		5 ☐ B. Sanders DET 16 309		5 ☐ R. Hampton NYG 14 170		5 ☐ T. Mathis ATL 16 315	
6 ☐ J. George ATL 16 296		6 ☐ D. Kreig ARZ 8 157		6 ☐ E. Smith DAL 15 365		6 ☐ L. Hoard CLE 16 233		6 ☐ H. Moore DET 16 255	
7 ☐ D. Marino MIA 16 370		7 ☐ R. Mirer SEA 13 169		7 ☐ T. Thomas BUF 15 248		7 ☐ J. Johnson NYJ 16 195		7 ☐ A. Reed BUF 16 278	
8 ☐ W. Moon MIN 15 290		8 ☐ S. Mitchell DET 9 127		8 ☐ C. Warren SEA 16 296		8 ☐ E. Rhett TB 16 179		8 ☐ J. Rice SF 16 363	
9 ☐ S. Young SF 16 444		9 ☐ V. Testaverde CLE 14 215		9 ☐ R. Watters PHI 16 292		9 ☐ H. Williams LA 16 229		9 ☐ A. Rison CLE 14 240	
REC (06)	TEAM GP PTS.	REC (07)	TEAM GP PTS.	K (08)	TEAM GP PTS.	DEFENSE (09)			
1 ☐ F. Barnett PHI 16 221		1 ☐ W. Anderson IND 15 172		1 ☐ M. Andersen NO 16 172		1 ☐ Arizona		★ No Hidden Charges!	
2 ☐ B. Blades SEA 16 219		2 ☐ V. Brisby NE 14 178		2 ☐ M. Bahr NE 16 171		2 ☐ Cleveland		★ Photocopies Welcome!	
3 ☐ H. Ellard WSH 15 250		3 ☐ W. Davis KC 13 165		3 ☐ J. Carney SD 16 203		3 ☐ Dallas		★ NEW - Team Defense	
4 ☐ I. Fryar MIA 16 246		4 ☐ Q. Early NO 15 196		4 ☐ S. Christie BUF 16 158		4 ☐ Green Bay		Group Included and	
5 ☐ M. Haynes NO 16 210		5 ☐ A. Harper TB 14 183		5 ☐ J. Elam DEN 16 171		5 ☐ Kansas City		More Points for	
6 ☐ A. Miller DEN 15 203		6 ☐ T. Martin SD 16 161		6 ☐ J. Jaeger LA 16 149		6 ☐ Minnesota		Field Goals!	
7 ☐ C. Pickens CIN 15 250		7 ☐ R. Moore ARZ 16 219		7 ☐ N. Johnson ATL 16 137		7 ☐ Pittsburgh			
8 ☐ J. Reed MIN 16 227		8 ☐ D. Scott CIN 16 175		8 ☐ F. Reveiz MIN 16 200		8 ☐ San Diego			
9 ☐ S. Sharpe DEN 14 216		9 ☐ M. Timpson CHI 14 188		9 ☐ P. Stoyanovich MIA 16 155		9 ☐ San Francisco			

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1995 NFL POSITION RANKINGS

RUNNING BACKS

It's no longer a question of what Detroit star running back Barry Sanders can do, it's a question of what he can't do.

After rushing for more than 1,000 yards in each of his first five seasons, Sanders set his sights on the record books in 1994 — trying to become only the third player ever to surpass 2,000 yards in a season (O.J. Simpson of Buffalo and Eric Dickerson of the Los Angeles Rams were the others).

Sanders' assault on the record books received national attention with a 194-yard performance against defending Super Bowl champion Dallas in Week 3. He had games of 166, 167, 188 and 237 yards during the season to bring him close to the coveted mark but fell just shy with 1,883 yards.

Despite the fact that he fell short of the 2,000-yard mark, opponents were still impressed by Sanders' magic.

"He's like Houdini," said Tampa Bay linebacker Demetrius DuBose after Sanders piled up 166 yards against the Bucs.

Sanders' 1,883 yards was fourth all-time on the NFL's single-season list and good enough to cement the 27-year-old as one of the best backs in the history of the NFL. It's not his usual stellar performances, however, that bring the most attention to his superhuman skills. Rather, it's the rare off-day that has others realizing how great he is.

"Minus one — that's just amazing," then - Green Bay Packer linebacker Bryce Paup said after his team held Sanders to negative yardage in a 16-12 win in the 1994 playoffs. "He's just the best running back ever to play the game."

While many teams can't hold Sanders under 100 yards, few, if any, can take the ball from him. An accomplishment that the modest Sanders should be proud of is that he hasn't fumbled a ball in his last 732 chances. His last turnover was on Dec. 6, 1992, against the Packers.



Detroit's Barry Sanders almost became the third running back in NFL history to rush for 2,000 yards in a season, piling up 1,883 last year.

RK./NAME	TEAM	YRS. PRO	HT./WT.	NOTES
1. Barry Sanders	Det.	7	5-8/203	The Lion King made a serious dash for 2,000 yards last season.
2. Emmitt Smith	Dall.	6	5-9/209	Owner of world's most famous hamstrings led NFL with 22 TDs.
3. Marshall Faulk	Ind.	2	5-10/200	Colt ran away from the field in the Pro Bowl for 180 yards.
4. Chris Warren	Sea.	6	6-2/225	Ferrum's biggest alum led the AFC in total yards from scrimmage (1,868).
5. Thurman Thomas	Buff.	8	5-10/198	Thomas has rushed for 1,000 yards or more six straight seasons.
6. Natrone Means	S.D.	3	5-10/245	Bolts have the Means (1,350 yards) to make another run at the Super Bowl.
7. Rodney Hampton	NYG	6	5-11/230	Should become Giants' all-time leading rusher this season.
8. Jerome Bettis	St.L.	3	5-11/243	The Battering Ram already has two 1,000-yard seasons to his credit.
9. Ricky Watters	Phi.	5	6-1/217	A San Francisco treat for Randall Cunningham and the Eagles.
10. Barry Foster	Pitt.	6	5-10/218	He's still one of the best, even if he is not wanted in Pittsburgh.
11. Errict Rhett	T.B.	2	5-11/211	The best back to come out of the University of Florida since Emmitt.
12. Leroy Hoard	Cle.	6	5-11/225	Versatile big back will face stiff challenge from newcomer Lorenzo White.
13. Edgar Bennett	G.B.	4	6-0/224	Led all backs with 78 receptions last year and rushed for 623 yards.
14. Bam Morris	Pitt.	2	6-0/235	He's a big reason why Foster is expendable in Pittsburgh.
15. William Floyd	S.F.	2	6-1/242	He may be the best fullback in the game, "Bar None."

1995 NFL POSITION RANKINGS

WIDE RECEIVERS

The Cowboys couldn't afford to sign both Michael Irvin and Alvin Harper this off-season. And there was little doubt who owner Jerry Jones wanted to keep.

"Michael Irvin is the heart of our football team," Jones said after signing Irvin to a five-year, \$15-million deal shortly before this year's free-agent signing period.

"What this really reflects is how much we think he means to this team in years to come. I think that by the time the five-year term of this agreement ends, he will have established himself as an NFL Hall of Fame receiver."

Nicknamed "The Playmaker," there is no better clutch receiver in the game than Irvin, except a guy by the name of Jerry Rice in San Francisco. Irvin already owns a Cowboys' record four career 100-yard receiving games in the postseason, two shy of the NFL mark established by Rice.

His 25 career 100-yard receiving games in the regular season is only one short of the team record held by Tony Hill, and his 61 postseason catches trail only Drew Pearson's 67.

In last year's 38-28 NFC Championship game loss to Rice and San Francisco, Irvin burned Deion Sanders and a 49ers' secondary featuring three Pro Bowlers for 12 receptions, 192 yards and two touchdowns. The 12 catches tied the NFC Championship game record held by Raymond Berry.

It's not the first time Irvin has shined vs. "Prime Time." He had eight catches in the team's colossal regular-season meeting in November. And in 1991, when Sanders was with Atlanta, Irvin had what then was a career-high 10 catches for 169 yards.

One of 17 children growing up in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Irvin earned his fourth consecutive Pro Bowl appearance last season, the first receiver in Cowboys' history to do so. Of his 79 catches, 20 went for a first down on either third or fourth down.



Cowboys wide receiver Michael Irvin already owns 25 career 100-yard receiving games.

RK./NAME	TEAM	YRS. PRO	HT./WT.	NOTES
1. Jerry Rice	S.F.	11	6-2/200	Should soon own every receiving record known to man.
2. Michael Irvin	Dall.	8	6-2/205	With Harper gone, no WR will receive as much attention as Irvin.
3. Tim Brown	L.A.	8	6-0/195	Led the AFC with 1,309 receiving yards.
4. Cris Carter	Minn.	9	6-3/202	Think Buddy Ryan wishes he could have this guy back?
5. Andre Rison	Cle.	7	6-1/188	The Dawg Pound will be drooling over this 80-catch-per-year guy.
6. Herman Moore	Det.	5	6-3/210	Size, scoring ability (11 TDs last season) reminds some of Rice.
7. Andre Reed	Buff.	11	6-2/190	Caught a career-high 90 passes and made seventh straight Pro Bowl.
8. Irving Fryar	Mia.	12	6-0/200	Shows no signs of slowing down; also had a career-best 73 catches.
9. Alvin Harper	T.B.	5	6-3/208	Averaged 24.9 yards per catch and one TD every four receptions in '94.
10. Carl Pickens	Cin.	4	6-2/206	An emerging star who led all AFC receivers with 11 touchdowns.
11. Henry Ellard	Wash.	13	5-11/185	Coming off a career year (74 catches, 1,397 yards).
12. Rob Moore	Ariz.	6	6-3/205	Finally made it to the Pro Bowl last season after catching 78 passes.
13. Fred Barnett	Phi.	6	6-0/200	Ray Rhodes is happy to have Barnett after saying goodbye to Rice in S.F.
14. Anthony Miller	Den.	9	5-11/190	After Rice, he may be the most dangerous after the catch.
15. Vincent Brisby	N.E.	3	6-2/188	It doesn't hurt having Drew Bledsoe throwing the ball 40 times per game.

1995 NFL POSITION RANKINGS

OFFENSIVE LINEMEN

Early in the next millenium in Canton, Ohio, Miami quarterback Dan Marino will saunter up to the podium and take his place in the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

And like most new inductees, he will undoubtedly thank Mom and Dad and his high school coach. You know the drill. But if there is any justice, Marino won't get too far along in his acceptance speech before thanking Richmond Jewel Webb. The 6-foot-6, 303-pound Webb has been Marino's personal bodyguard since April 1990, when he was the ninth player taken overall in the NFL Draft out of Texas A&M.

Ask the people in the Miami front office and they'll tell you that drafting Webb was a no-brainer.

"There was nothing not to like about him," said Dolphins director of player personnel Tom Heckert. "He had the footwork, the balance, the strength, the size. Not only could he be a great lineman, but we decided he could be the perfect left tackle."

Mission accomplished. Playing the league's toughest position — protecting the quarterback's blind side from the likes of Bruce Smith and Derrick Thomas — Webb has been a star since Day One. Webb, who last season signed a three-year, \$8.1 million contract extension, has been to the Pro Bowl in each of his five seasons, the most ever by a Dolphins' offensive lineman. In fact, Webb and left guard Keith Sims, a fellow Pro Bowler, form the game's best one-two punch.

"Ralph Tamm and Harris Barton of the 49ers are a great guard-tackle combination, and Erik Williams and Kevin Gogan were very good before Gogan went to the Raiders," Heckert said. "But it's hard to come up with a better combination in football today than Keith and Richmond. They're probably the best."



Dolphins left tackle Richmond Webb has made the Pro Bowl in each of his five NFL seasons.

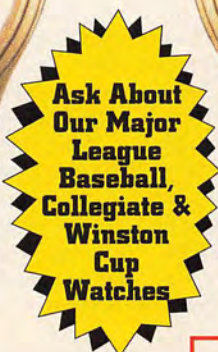
RK./NAME	TEAM	YRS. PRO	HT./WT.	NOTES
1. Richmond Webb	Mia.	6	6-6/303	Dan Marino's bodyguard is 5 for 5 in Pro Bowl appearances.
2. Willie Roaf	N.O.	3	6-5/300	Helped Saints cut down number of sacks by 27 last season (from 1993).
3. Randall McDaniel	Minn.	8	6-3/274	The premier guard in the game; has made six consecutive Pro Bowls.
4. Erik Williams	Dall.	5	6-6/322	Was perhaps the game's most dominating tackle before car accident.
5. Lomas Brown	Det.	11	6-4/275	Five-time Pro Bowler is one of game's best left tackles.
6. Mark Stepnoski	Hou.	7	6-2/269	Steve McNair will be taking snaps from the league's best center.
7. Nate Newton	Dall.	10	6-3/320	The Fridge has retired but "The Kitchen" remains.
8. Harris Barton	S.F.	9	6-4/286	He and Steve Wallace form the best tackle tandem in the NFL.
9. Bruce Matthews	Hou.	13	6-5/298	Mr. Versatility will shift back to guard with the addition of Stepnoski.
10. Keith Sims	Mia.	6	6-3/309	Helped Dolphins to best rushing season since 1983.
11. Gary Zimmerman	Den.	10	6-6/294	A Pro Bowler again despite team's failure to protect John Elway (46 sacks).
12. Dermontti Dawson	Pitt.	8	6-2/286	Only six Pro Bowl appearances behind Mike Webster, who he replaced.
13. Jim Lachey	Wash.	11	6-6/294	Did not allow a sack in Redskins' drive to the Super Bowl in 1991.
14. Bruce Armstrong	N.E.	9	6-4/284	In Armstrong they trust; must block Drew Bledsoe's blind side.
15. Bart Oates	S.F.	11	6-3/278	Starting center on three Super Bowl champs (2 with Giants, 1 with 49ers).

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1995 NFL POSITION RANKINGS

TIGHT ENDS



Ben Coates
caught 96 balls
last season.

He grabbed the NFL by the Coates-tail early on last season and never let go. Before anyone knew it, tight end Ben Coates of tiny Livingstone College had torched two AFC East opponents for 17 catches, 285 yards and four touchdowns. His nine-catch, 124-yard, two-touchdown performance in Week 2 certainly caught Buffalo All-Pro running back Thurman Thomas by surprise.

"I don't know where he came from, but you can send him to Hawaii," Thomas said.

Thomas proved to be right. Before the season was over, New England's Coates (96 catches, 1,174 yards, seven TDs), broke Todd Christensen's record of 95 catches in a season by a tight end. He also became the first Patriot since Irving Fryar in 1991 to surpass 1,000 yards receiving. Only speedster Stanley Morgan (1,491 yards in 1986) had a bigger year yardage-wise.

Coates also set a New England record with 12 catches in a 12-10 win at Indianapolis in Week 12. It was his fifth 100-yard plus receiving game of the season. His 10-catch effort in the Patriots' 26-20 overtime victory over Minnesota helped propel New England on a sea-

son-ending seven-game winning streak.

A fifth-round draft choice in 1991, Coates is the second great tight end to fall into Bill Parcells' lap. Mark Bavaro, nicknamed "Rambo" by his teammates, helped deliver two Super Bowl rings to Parcells with the New York Giants. Coates, however, other than being the strong, quiet type, is nothing like Bavaro.

"Ben has more speed than any tight end I ever had," Parcells said. "The possibility is there for him to become separate and distinct among guys who play that position."

Coates may get there fast with the bionic-armed Drew Bledsoe at quarterback. In just his second season, Bledsoe set NFL records for pass attempts in a game (70 in the OT win over the Vikings) and a season (691). The Patriots' tight end was just one of five receivers to catch 50 passes or more from Bledsoe.

"The first time I saw Drew in training camp his rookie year, I knew I'd never played with anyone like him before," said the 6-foot-5, 245-pound Coates. "His ball gets up on you really fast. He'll hit you in the face mask if you're not careful."

RK./NAME	TEAM	YRS. PRO	HT./WT.	NOTES
1. Ben Coates	N.E.	5	6-5/245	He should be the first tight end to hit the century mark in receptions. . .
2. Shannon Sharpe	Den.	6	6-2/230	If Sharpe (87 catches, 1,010 yards) doesn't get there first.
3. Brent Jones	S.F.	9	6-4/230	Just another weapon (49 catches, 9 TDs) at Steve Young's disposal.
4. Eric Green	Mia.	6	6-5/280	He's now the fish that left Pittsburgh.
5. Jay Novacek	Dall.	11	6-4/234	Troy Aikman is glad to have Novacek (16 catches in postseason) back.
6. Keith Jackson	G.B.	8	6-2/258	If he decides to play, the Pack will have one of the best.
7. Johnny Mitchell	NYJ	4	6-3/241	If only he lived up to his own hype; could be used as an H-back this year.
8. Howard Cross	NYG	7	6-5/258	Derek Brown was a bust. Cross has been anything but.
9. Pete Metzelaars	Car.	14	6-7/254	You won't be able to tell Carolina's an expansion team at tight end.
10. Jackie Harris	T.B.	6	6-4/248	Harris (26 catches, 3 TDs) is better than last year's numbers indicate.

KICKERS/PUNTERS

From the lineage that brought Chargers fans memorable kickers like Ralf Mojsiejenko and Rolf Benirschke, San Diego's John Carney has also made quite a name for himself, albeit one fans can finally pronounce. Last season, he proved his incredible 1993 numbers (a pair of six field-goal games among his 31 con-

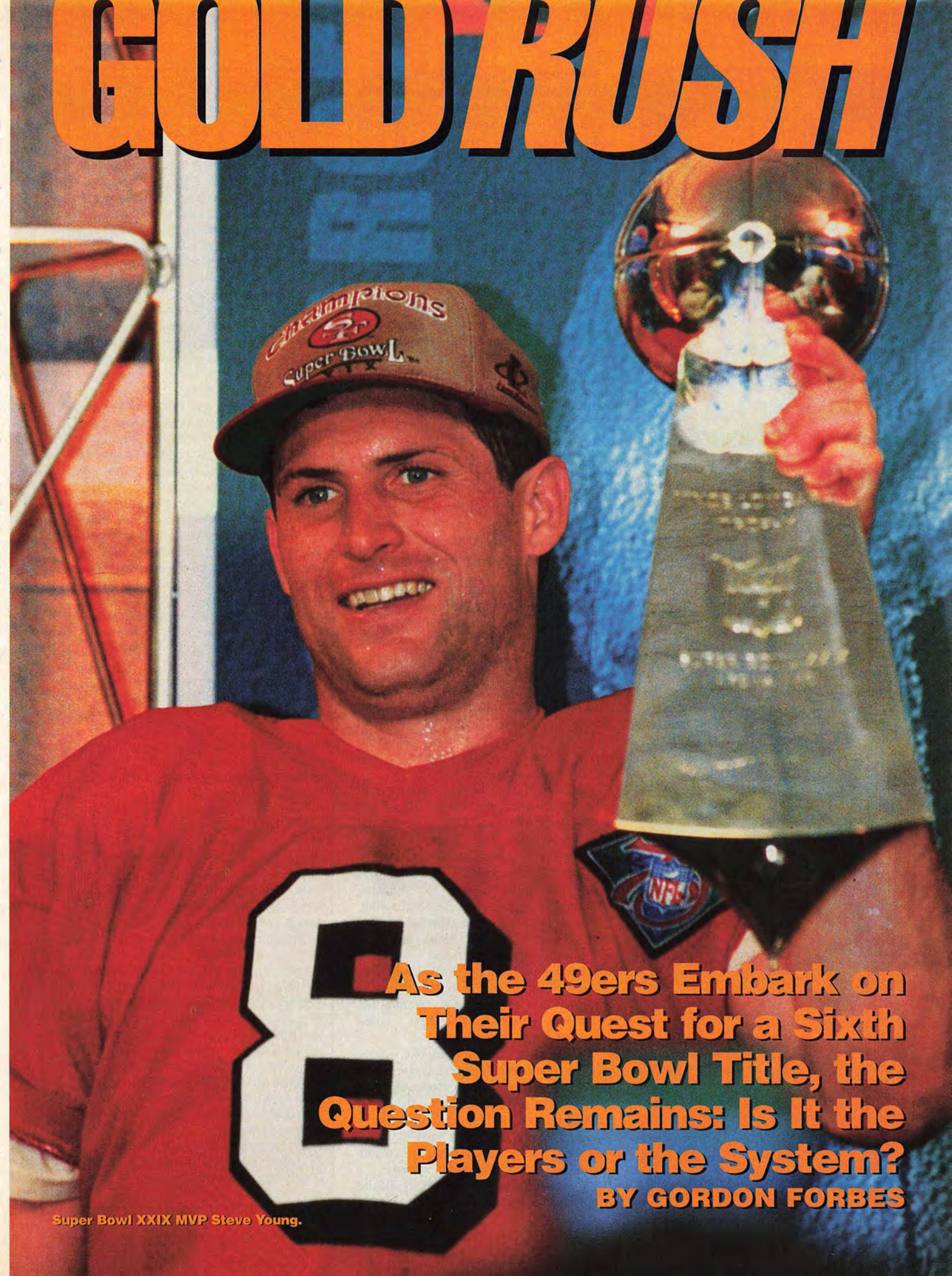
nections) was not a fluke by hitting 34-of-38 field-goal attempts, including 21 in a row dating back to the end of the 1993 campaign. Whether it was one of his 33 straight extra-point tries sailing through the uprights or a long-distance call from 50 yards, which he hit twice last season, a close game was never over

so long as it was within Carney's range.

Seattle's "Bootin" Rick Tuten quietly became the NFL's premier punter last season. His 42.9-yard average was among the best in the league, and he was a master a pinning opponents inside their 20, something he did 33 times last season.

KICKERS					PUNTERS				
RK./NAME	TEAM	YRS. PRO	'94 FG	LONG	RK./NAME	TEAM	YRS. PRO	'94 AVG.	IN 20
1. John Carney	S.D.	6	34/38	50	1. Rick Tuten	Sea.	7	42.9	33
2. Morten Anderson	N.O.	14	28/39	48	2. Reggie Roby	T.B.	13	44.4	21
3. Steve Christie	Buff.	6	24/28	52	3. Sean Landeta	St.L.	11	44.8	23
4. Fuad Reveiz	Minn.	11	34/39	51	4. Rich Camarillo	Hou.	15	42.9	34
5. Pete Stoyanovich	Mia.	4	24/31	50	5. Jeff Feagles	Ariz.	8	40.8	33
6. Gary Anderson	Pitt.	14	24/29	50	6. Jeff Gossett	L.A.	14	43.9	19
7. Jeff Jaeger	L.A.	9	22/28	51	7. Tommy Barnhardt	Car.	9	43.6	14
8. Chris Jacke	G.B.	7	19/26	50	8. Mark Royals	Det.	6	39.7	35
9. Matt Stover	Cle.	6	26/28	45	9. Mike Saxon	Minn.	11	42.9	28
10. Jason Elam	Den.	3	30/37	54	10. Lee Johnson	Cin.	11	43.8	19

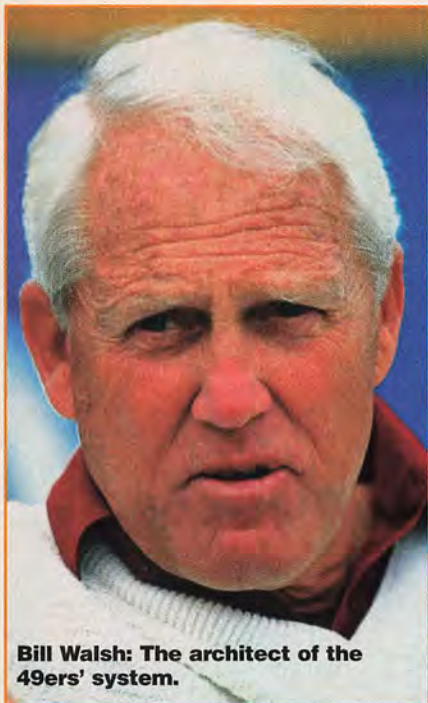
GOLD RUSH



**As the 49ers Embark on
Their Quest for a Sixth
Super Bowl Title, the
Question Remains: Is It the
Players or the System?**

BY GORDON FORBES

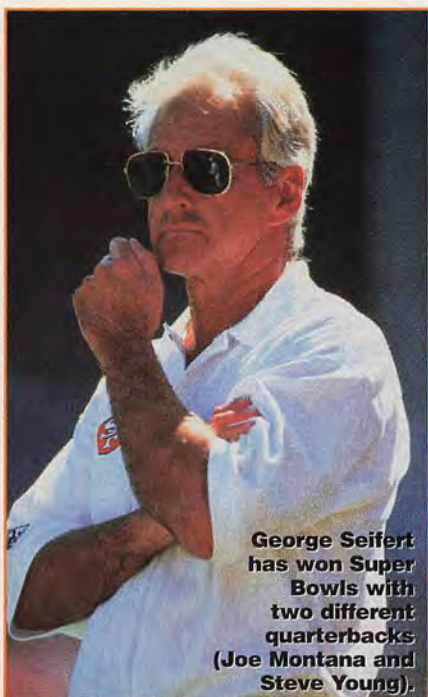
Super Bowl XXIX MVP Steve Young.



Bill Walsh: The architect of the 49ers' system.

Ever since the San Francisco 49ers began winning Super Bowls, the question has persisted. What makes the 49ers so successful, the system or the players?

"It's not just the football part, that's for sure," head coach George Seifert said. "It kind of starts with the way Eddie [owner Eddie DeBartolo Jr.] handles the players, as to what he might expect. Then, it's just a matter of trying to be first class, having the best teachers and creating the best environment you can have for everybody to be successful."



George Seifert has won Super Bowls with two different quarterbacks (Joe Montana and Steve Young).

And there's no doubt that the 49ers have been the most successful team in the '80s and '90s — the years when pro football became king of the sports television world and the touchdown pass became its high drama. But there is wide disagreement over the reason behind their success. Ask former offensive coordinator Mike Holmgren, and it's the quarterback. Ask former scouting director Tony Razzano, and it's the players. Ask former coach Bill Walsh, under whom the 49ers won Super Bowls XVI, XIX and XXIII, and it's the system that allowed his players to showcase their individual skills.

Holmgren loves that 49ers system. The rhythmic three- and five-step drops. The nifty draws. The beautifully conceived five-receiver patterns. Yet Holmgren, who uses a variation of the system in Green Bay, says it all starts with a very special quarterback.

"That is a great system," conceded Holmgren, "but to make that thing really work the best, you have to have a great quarterback — a guy who can make great decisions and really do it if he has a bad day, your team is not going to do real well. Now, they've had Joe Montana and Steve Young, and, for a stretch in my last year, Steve Bono, who came in and did a marvelous job."

Holmgren credited the 49ers front office, too.

"If they lose a particular player, they have always, always aggressively gone out and replaced that player," he said. "And for years, the nucleus of that team has been there. You've got [John] Taylor, [Jerry] Rice and Brent Jones. Before, it was [Tom] Rathman and [Roger] Craig for a long time. And they've had [Steve] Wallace, [Harris] Barton and [Jesse] Sapolu inside. So, you've had seven or eight guys who played in that system for a long time and who are very talented guys."

Razzano, the scout who pushed and argued for Montana before the 1979 Draft, finds all those stories about the system laughable.

"Any time you win," said Razzano, "it's primarily due to the talent level. I don't care what game you're playing. Joe Montana, you could have given him the single-wing. This system business started with one man, the 49ers system guy. Bill [Walsh] thought it was going all around the league."

Razzano has feuded with Walsh before. But his put-down of the system theory is supported by Los Angeles Rams administrator Jack Faulkner, who has scouted dozens of 49ers games.

"No question, the players are No. 1 every way," Faulkner said. "The system doesn't do that much. If [backup quarterback] Elvis Grbac had to play [last season], they're in trouble. Detroit, if they don't have Barry Sanders, they're just another team."

Razzano agrees that some NFL teams employ a different take on the system.

"You take it and you improve on it," he said. "Just because you happen to throw a

BAYWATCH (The rise of the 49ers)

1979: Niners hire Bill Walsh, draft Joe Montana.

1980: Montana captures starting QB job away from Steve DeBerg. Second-year WR Dwight Clark catches 82 passes.

1981: "The Catch." Montana, rolling to his right, caps a late 90-yard touchdown drive by finding Clark in the corner of the end zone with a 6-yard TD pass to beat the Cowboys in the NFC Championship game. The 49ers go on to win the first of their five Super Bowl titles by beating Cincinnati, 26-21.

1982: The 49ers strike out in the strike-shortened season.

1983: Rookie Roger Craig is second on the team in rushing (725 yards) and receiving (427 yards). In a battle of the last two Super Bowl champs, the 49ers are edged by the Redskins, 24-21, in the NFC Championship game.

1984: The 49ers are almost perfect, losing only to Pittsburgh, 20-17, during the regular season en route to their second Super Bowl title. MVP Montana leads the Niners past Miami's Killer Bs, 38-16.

1985: A San Francisco Treat. The 49ers welcome their next superstar — wide receiver Jerry Rice — who immediately becomes a favorite target of Montana's (49 catches, 927 yards). Craig becomes the first player in the history of the NFL to gain 1,000 yards both rushing (1,050) and receiving (1,106) in the same year.

1986: Back injury forces Montana to the sidelines. Ronnie Lott's 10 interceptions lead the NFL. Rice (86 catches, 1,570 yards, 15 TDs) emerges as one of the game's great receivers.

1987: Rice sets an NFL record with 22 touchdown catches. Steve Young (10 TDs, 0 INTs) is terrific as Montana's backup, but 49ers are upset by Minnesota, 36-24, in an NFC Divisional playoff game.

1988: More Montana magic. His 10-yard TD pass to John Taylor with 34 seconds remaining caps an 11-play, 92-yard drive that gives the 49ers a 20-16 victory over the Bengals in Super Bowl XXIII.

1989: Walsh moves to the broadcast booth, but the 49ers keep rolling behind former defensive coordinator George Seifert, winning their second straight Super Bowl and fourth of the decade. Their 55-10 rout of the Denver Broncos in New Orleans represents the biggest margin of victory in Super Bowl history.

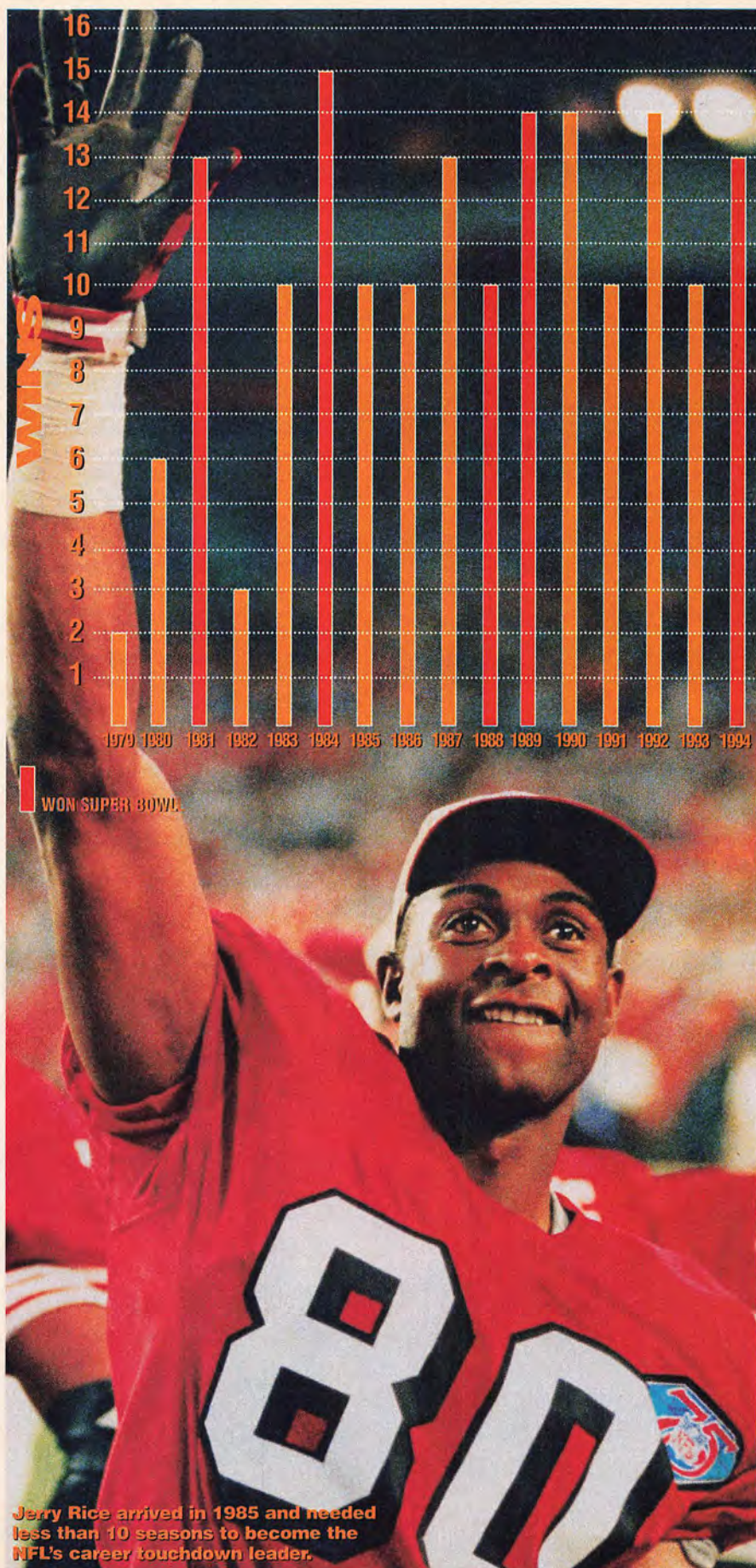
1990: The New York Giants end the 49ers' dream of a third-straight Super Bowl championship by knocking out Montana and Frisco in the NFC Championship game, 15-13. Rice hits the century mark in receptions (100 catches, 1,502 yards).

1991: Lott and Craig leave via free agency and Montana misses the entire season after undergoing elbow surgery. Young goes 5-5 as the starter before succumbing to a sprained knee. His replacement, Steve Bono, goes 5-1 down the stretch but can't get the 49ers to the playoffs.

1992: Young leads the NFL in passing and a new offensive star emerges in running back Ricky Walters (1,013 yards). But the story of the year is Montana's return, albeit one game (the season finale). He completes 15 of 21 passes for 126 yards and two TDs in the 49ers' 24-6 win over Detroit.

1993: Say it ain't so. Joe leaves for Kansas City. Young responds by becoming the first player in NFL history to lead the league in passing three straight years. Unfortunately for the lefty, he fails to lead the 49ers to the Super Bowl for the second straight year and the hearts of San Francisco remain Montana's.

1994: The 49ers win a league-record fifth Super Bowl as MVP Young finally emerges from Montana's shadow to lead a 49-26 rout of the Chargers. Young sets a Super Bowl record with six TD passes, breaking the record of five set by Montana against the Broncos. Frisco also sets an NFL record with its 12th consecutive season of 10 or more wins. Rice (139 career TDs) surpasses Jim Brown as the NFL's all-time touchdown leader.



flare out there and somebody catches it that doesn't mean you're into that system. And now they're talking about the West Coast system. I fail to know what the West Coast system is. Listen, this all started with Paul Brown. It's Paul Brown's system."

Razzano and Mike Shanahan, yet another 49ers coordinator who moved up to head coach in Denver, could have a lovely debate on Walsh's offense. Shanahan credits Walsh with developing the system. But Shanahan also concedes that the copy-cat clubs have lifted only parts of the 49ers offense. As Holmgren said, it takes a Joe Montana or a Steve Young to run Walsh's entire package.

"What we tried to do was run it from different formations," Shanahan said. "The system still involves the ability to get all the receivers involved in the play. You have to have 11 complete players. Even last year, with all the injuries, we didn't have any doubts about getting five receivers out."

Walsh, now acknowledged as the NFL's quarterback guru — he tutors draft prospects willing to pay between \$10,000-\$30,000 for lessons — agrees with Holmgren's theory that the system demands an exceptional quarterback. But Walsh insists the system can work with a not-so-special talent under center. He cites Virgil Carter, who ran the system for Cincinnati in the early '70s.

"He was very limited," recalled Walsh, who coached the Bengals quarterbacks and receivers. "But he was also very competitive. Everything we did had to be timed with his passing arm, the essence of which you see now — the timing of every play, the uniqueness of every play they run."

Walsh credits the old masters, Brown and Sid Gillman, with planting the roots of the system. But clearly, Walsh feels that he developed the special package that has become synonymous with the 49ers and those five Super Bowl trophies that gleam in the California sunshine.

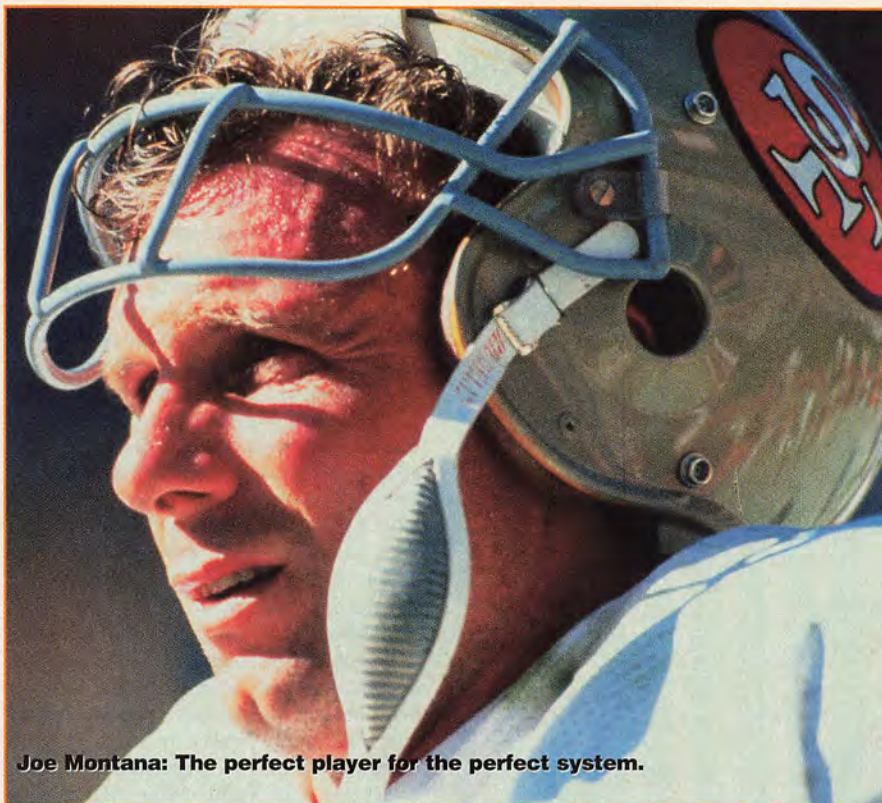
"The key is that we isolated every skill to [the quarterback's] level and focused on ways to test it. You do not have a purist system, like the run-and-shoot. It's very flexible."

So flexible that Walsh once used Bob Trumpy, Bruce Coslet and Chip Myers as his wideouts in Cincinnati.

"They were all tight end guys, but they adjusted," Walsh said. "Chip and Bob made the Pro Bowl."

Walsh, and later Holmgren and Shanahan, are forever linked to Montana and Young, those special quarterbacks who ran the system. Yet, over their great years, the 49ers also developed a solid running game to feed off their high-percentage passing attack. In their Super Bowl years, the 49ers' run-pass mix was truly balanced: 560 runs, 546 passes in 1981; 534 and 523 in 1984; 527 and 549 in 1988; 493 and 528 in 1989 and 491 and 546 last year.

Indeed, in winning their fifth Super Bowl,



Joe Montana: The perfect player for the perfect system.

the 49ers used the old sweep-and-trap running system made famous by the Pittsburgh Steelers. Each 49ers lineman was skilled at blocking in space, as they say. For example, when the 49ers ran their power sweep to the left — the old Franco Harris weapon — right tackle Barton pulled and mopped up the pursuit. And, as one scouting report noted: “Be alert, they will chop block, especially on sweep plays away from them.”

The 49ers like to play mental games like that: Chop blocks, illegal picks and, last year, the tricks of the trade that allowed them to steal cornerback Deion Sanders from the Atlanta Falcons. The arrival of Sanders enabled the 49ers to move Merton Hanks to free safety, replacing Dana Hall, who had coverage problems and had lost his confidence.

The 49ers defense ranked eighth, allowing only 35 touchdowns. And, under Seifert, they were first in 1987 and third in 1988. Yet, the 49ers system has always related to offense, and to the players who, as Walsh once noted, could execute a passing drill without the ball touching the ground.

Sure, we remember Ronnie Lott as a banger and Dan Bunz for his game-saving tackle of Cincinnati’s Charles Alexander in Super Bowl XVI. And how the 49ers shuffled in a nine-man rotation behind the Lawrence Pillers-Manu Tuiasosopo-Dwaine Board starting rush line in Super Bowl XIX.

In the Walsh era, however, more 49ers defensive players (16) made the Pro Bowl than offensive players (15). Under Seifert, it’s been 31-16 in favor of offensive players.

There is also a historical footnote to con-

sider when analyzing the rise of the 49ers. If history was initially unkind to Walsh — he was 47, with 19 years of experience when the 49ers gave him his first NFL head coaching job — it was truly charitable once he joined the 49ers. Said Walsh of his first team: “It was pretty much derelict among sports teams in existence at the time. Eddie had four coaches in two years. I was the fifth.”

But in the late '70s, the NFL owners liberalized the passing rules to satisfy the TV networks. Suddenly, defenders were limited to one bump on receivers in a 5-yard zone and blockers were permitted to jam rushers with their jet-wing arms. In effect, they played into Walsh’s hands.

Consider how the increase in pass plays has coincided with the rise of the 49ers: 50.1 percent pass plays in 1980; 53.5 in 1985; 53.9 in 1990; 54.9 in 1993 and 56.0 last year.

So, why have the 49ers dominated pro football despite the Walsh-to-Seifert and Montana-to-Young changes? Sure, the Walsh system is beautifully conceived. And, sure, DeBartolo flies his players in large-body DC-10 jets and makes sure their stomachs are full and their legs have room.

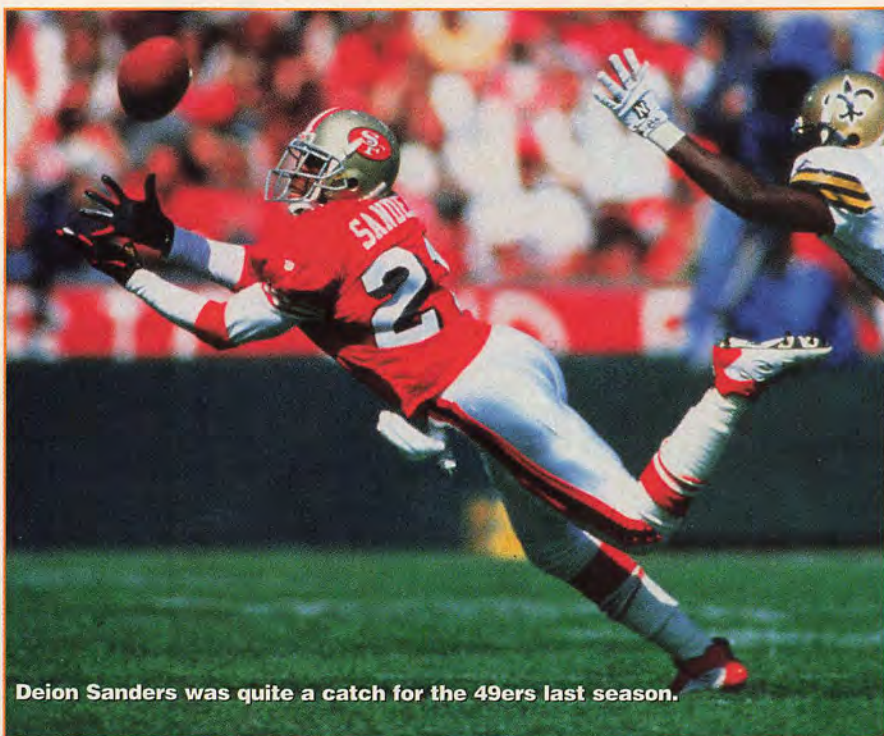
“But now, if you get into the football end, it’s just that you somehow, some way, find a way to win,” Seifert said. “Move the ball. Be creative. Utilize all of your talents.”

Ah, the 49ers’ talent. That’s really why they have produced five Super Bowl championships. And the windfall isn’t over, despite the perils of a free-agency/salary cap system.

“If we maintain our game plan and keep our heads about us,” said club president Carmen Policy, “we’re going to be in excellent shape for the rest of the decade. On the other hand, if we do some dumb things, we will have mortgaged the future and engaged in credit card mentality. And we will have proven our naysayers to be correct.”

Don’t bet on the naysayers. **JT**

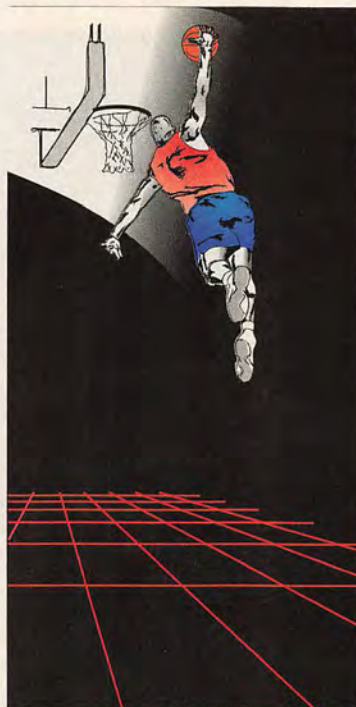
Gordon Forbes covers the NFL for USA Today



Deion Sanders was quite a catch for the 49ers last season.

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EXPANSION BLUES

NFL Newcomers Jacksonville and Carolina Hope to Reverse the Trend of Expansion Losers

By CHARLES CHANDLER



Jacksonville banked on USC offensive lineman Tony Boselli.



Penn State QB Kerry Collins was Carolina's first pick in its first-ever draft.

It has been 19 years since the NFL last opened a season with the refreshing addition of expansion teams. For an idea of just how long it's been since Seattle and Tampa Bay began play, consider that current University of Florida coach Steve Spurrier was the Buccaneers' quarterback, Gerald Ford was U.S. president, Drew Bledsoe was 4 years old and the NFL had no such thing as unrestricted free agency.

So it is with a great sense of curiosity and expectancy that the NFL and its fans await the arrival of the Carolina Panthers and the Jacksonville Jaguars.

(Timeout. Before we go any further, take a self-test. Do you know the names of the coaches of the two teams? If you know Tom Coughlin, who built Boston College into a winner, is the Jaguars coach, give yourself a gold star. If you know Dom Capers, the Pittsburgh Steelers' defense coordinator the past three seasons, is the Panthers coach, give yourself two more stars. Even one of the players Carolina selected in the college draft, University of Washington lineman Andrew Peterson, didn't remember Capers' name moments after he'd gotten off the phone with the man.)

In case you're wondering whether you'll recognize anyone on either team, don't fret. You will.

If you see the Panthers this season, you'll catch Frank Reich throwing to two of his former Buffalo receivers, tight end Pete Metzelaars and wideout Don Beebe; plus linebackers Lamar Lathon, Sam Mills and Darion Conner chasing the opposing quarterback. And, surely, you remember cornerback Tim McKyer from his days with the Falcons, Dolphins, 49ers and Steelers.

As for the Jaguars, quarterback Steve Beuerlein will throw to Desmond Howard or hand off to Reggie Cobb, and safety Darren Carrington will start his career anew after being part of the Chargers secondary that 49ers' quarterback Steve Young picked apart in the Super Bowl.

Who isn't anxious to see what kind of teams the Panthers and Jaguars can field in their first seasons? Can Jacksonville open its season at home with a win over Houston, which was a paltry 2-14 last year? Can Carolina at least split with NFC West rivals Atlanta and St. Louis?

One big problem is the expansion teams didn't sign their first players until Dec. 15, less than nine months before kicking off their first regular season.

With continuity and chemistry as important as talent in the NFL, there's a tendency to expect the worst: The Pitiful Panthers and the Jacksonville Jokes.

History tells us that expansion teams always sing the blues.

The Buccaneers were 0-14 in 1976, then lost their first 12 games the next season. Tampa Bay failed to score in 11 games dur-

ing the 0-26 start. The Seahawks went 2-12 their first season, but at least they scored in every game.

The best any of the six most recent NFL expansion teams have done is 3-11, the records of the 1961 Minnesota Vikings, 1966 Atlanta Falcons and 1967 New Orleans Saints.

The 1960 Dallas Cowboys weren't much better than Tampa Bay. Coach Tom Landry's first team was 0-11-1.

Coughlin has carefully studied previous expansion teams. He's even talked extensively with John McKay, Tampa Bay's first coach. Capers, normally a stickler for detail, has taken only quick glances at the miseries his expansion predecessors experienced.

"I've seen the records some of those teams had and I figured it would do me absolutely no good to do any more research than that," Capers said. "I normally don't like doing research that ends up being real negative. Besides, we're going to try to take this thing from a different perspective."

Most NFL executives think the Panthers and Jaguars can realistically expect to be 4-12 this season. Ex-49ers coach Bill Walsh and Atlanta vice president of player personnel Ken Herock, who held a similar position with the '76 Bucs, say 6-10 is a realistic goal.

Carolina general manager Bill Polian fires back that Capers should be NFL Coach of the Year if the Panthers win four games.

However, it is universally agreed upon that the Panthers and Jaguars have far more ammunition at their disposal than any previous expansion teams. Unrestricted free agency, which arrived in the NFL with the 1993 collective bargaining agreement between management and players, is the primary reason why.

Carolina and Jacksonville also were armed with more extra draft picks — two per round — than any previous expansion team and a veteran allocation draft plan that at least assured them of being able to select healthy players.

Green Bay Packers general manager Ron Wolf, who was Tampa Bay's vice president of operations in 1976, says Carolina and Jacksonville have "an enormous advantage" over the hand he was initially dealt.

"Free agency gives these teams an extra pot for getting players that we didn't have," Wolf said. "They also had a very liberal expansion draft. We got the sick, tired, hungry and the old. We couldn't inspect the medical records and give those guys physicals like Carolina and Jacksonville were able to do."

Wolf noted that it took the Buccaneers three years before getting a solid quarterback, Doug Williams, and that Carolina and Jacksonville already are set at that most important position.

Reich is Carolina's first-season starter, while draft pick Kerry Collins develops for



Tennessee's James Stewart will be an immediate contributor in Jacksonville.

the future. Beuerlein gives Jacksonville a veteran to play ahead of youngsters Mark Brunell, Rob Johnson and Andre Ware.

Wolf said he couldn't predict what kind of seasons the Panthers and Jaguars will have this fall, but he warned that injuries, or lack thereof, will be a big factor because neither team has much depth.

"Another big thing they'll have to look out for is not to panic," Wolf said. "If they don't come out of the chute the way they want, there could be a tendency to panic entirely. That'll be the toughest part."

Capers and Coughlin have given their teams the same, singular goal: Win.

"Before I took the job here, I had a lot of people saying, 'Why in the world would you want to do that if you'd have a chance to go somewhere else that already had a team in place?'" Capers said. "I've never, ever felt that way."

"We just have to keep everything in perspective and take care of the little things. Sure, we're starting from the ground level. We may have to look toward little successes in the beginning. But there's no doubt in my mind that we're going to be successful."

It will be interesting to track the progress of the Panthers and Jaguars over

the years because of the distinctly different approaches they've taken.

Carolina owner Jerry Richardson is the first ex-NFL player to own a team since George Halas in Chicago. Richardson was a receiver for the Baltimore Colts in 1959 and '60.

Richardson built his team the traditional NFL way, starting at the top with a strong front office headed by league veterans Mike McCormack, the team president, and Polian. McCormack was a Hall of Fame tackle in Cleveland and has been an NFL assistant coach, head coach and team executive. Polian is credited with building Buffalo's four Super Bowl teams when he was the Bills' GM.

Jacksonville owner Wayne Weaver modeled the Jaguars' hierarchy after the Dallas Cowboys of the Jimmy Johnson era, hiring a college coach and giving him the full authority of a general manager. Coughlin, a former NFL assistant coach with the Eagles, Packers and Giants, essentially has the power of McCormack, Polian and Capers combined.

There's not a member of the NFL's "old guard" in Jacksonville. Coughlin is assisted in the front office by two 33-year-olds — team president David Seldin, who has a business background, and vice president Michael Hyughe.

"We're trying to take a more modern approach to the game," said Hyughe, former general counsel and executive vice president for administration for the Detroit Lions. "In the past, NFL teams were made up of guys who've been working in the league for 30 or 40 years. Today, we're trying to get people who adapt to the times."

Coughlin and Capers are also strikingly dissimilar. Coughlin, whose Boston College team stunned top-ranked Notre Dame late in the 1993 season, is a stern, forceful leader in the mold of Vince Lombardi. Former players have called him a drill sergeant.

Capers, whose Pittsburgh defense was nicknamed "Blitzburgh" because of the constant pressure it put on opposing passers, is just as demanding, but in a quieter way. He rarely raises his voice and would easily defeat Coughlin if a popularity contest were taken of the two rosters.

The Panthers and Jaguars built their first teams in four phases. On Dec. 15, a week before the end of the 1994 regular season, they were able to sign 10 players each who were not on NFL rosters.

Two months later, Carolina selected 35 players from other teams in the expansion allocation draft and Jacksonville picked 32, including Beuerlein.

Next came the opening of the signing period for unrestricted free agents and the college draft. Both teams were aggressive in both areas and appeared to do well.

The Panthers were the NFL's biggest spenders in free agency, startling the rest of the league by giving Giants defensive end Mike Fox a five-year, \$9-million deal that more than doubled his '94 salary.

Carolina's signees included Buffalo backup Reich to be its starting quarterback, Houston's Lathon to be its primary passer-rusher and Seattle's John Kasay as its placekicker.



Carolina chose to beef up its offensive line — selecting Texas' Blake Brockermeyer.

The Jaguars signed Kelvin Pritchett and Jeff Lageman to be their defensive leaders.

Carolina and Jacksonville, then, had the first two picks in the draft and targeted two key long-term needs — quarterback and left offensive tackle.

The Panthers traded the No. 1 pick to Cincinnati for the No. 5 and 36 selections. Carolina didn't want to select Penn State running back Ki-Jana Carter, the top prospect in the draft, and expose him behind its still-developing offensive line. So, with the fifth pick, the Panthers got their quarterback of the future, Penn State's Collins.

Jacksonville kept the second pick and chose Southern California tackle Tony Boselli.

Armed with extra draft picks given them by the NFL because of their expansion status, the Panthers and Jacksonville made several trade-ups and wound up having the two most successful drafts in the league.

After three trades in the first two rounds, Carolina wound up with the fifth (Collins), 22nd (Fort Valley State cornerback Tyrone Poole), 29th (Texas tackle Blake Brockermeyer) and 36th (Northeast Louisiana defensive end Shawn King) picks.

Following Boselli, the Jaguars picked 19th (Tennessee running back James Stewart), 40th (Michigan State tackle Brian DeMarco) and 64th (Augustana linebacker Bryan Schwartz), then lucked into getting Southern Cal quarterback Rob Johnson in the fourth round.

The rivalry between the two teams already is intense and will peak on July 29, when they play their first preseason exhibition game against one another in the Hall of Fame Game in Canton, Ohio. Because of the NFL's scheduling formula, however, it will be at least three years before they can meet in the regular season.

The ultimate for both teams would be to someday meet in the Super Bowl. Richardson has vowed the Panthers will win a championship within their first 10 years. Weaver hasn't been that specific, but says he'll be very disappointed if the Jaguars don't win a title in the not-so-distant future.

How soon can they become a contender? It may be much sooner than you think. Even without free agency, Seattle was 9-7 in its third season and Tampa Bay played in the NFC Championship game in its fourth year. Of course, neither team remained a consistent winner.

One thing is certain: The Panthers and Jaguars are on parallel courses and will be constantly compared.

"Even if we didn't encourage it, the press certainly would," Seldin said. "They'll use the franchises as yardsticks, each to measure the other, even though we're in different conferences and won't play each other frequently."

"From our perspective, the key is to keep ourselves focused on what we want to accomplish, which is to build a long-term winning tradition. The risk for both expansion franchises is getting distracted by what the other guy is doing."

"In a race, the guy who looks back is the guy who loses." **JT**

Charles Chandler covers the Panthers for the Charlotte Observer.



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THE "AIR" AP



New England's Drew Bledsoe Leads a Group of Young QBs Ready to Create Their Own Legacies

BY RON BORGES

The first time he really noticed something was different about himself, Drew Bledsoe was 14 and a freshman at Walla Walla High in Eastern Washington's wheat belt. He had just let a football fly in the direction of one of his teammates, and the rate of speed at which it was traveling amazed even him.

Physics was not his thing, but even Bledsoe could tell there was something unusual about how this ball was moving. Fast would be one way to describe it. Very fast would be another.

"It was the last game of our season and I dropped back to about our 45-yard line and started scrambling," the New England Patriots' future recalled. "I saw a receiver open in the end zone. I let it go and I watched the ball go through his hands and out the back of the end zone. It shocked me. I remember thinking, 'Wow, I can throw pretty hard.'"

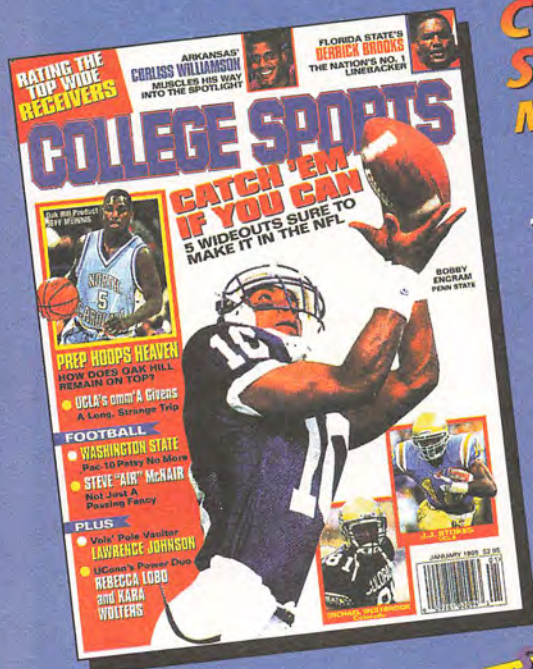
That is a conclusion a lot of people have come to over the years, including nearly everyone in the NFL these days, as Bledsoe emerges as the early leader in the arms race to see which of the league's Young Gun quarterbacks becomes the first to replace the ongoing legacies of Dan Marino, John Elway and Jim Kelly. Bledsoe is not alone in

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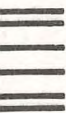
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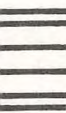
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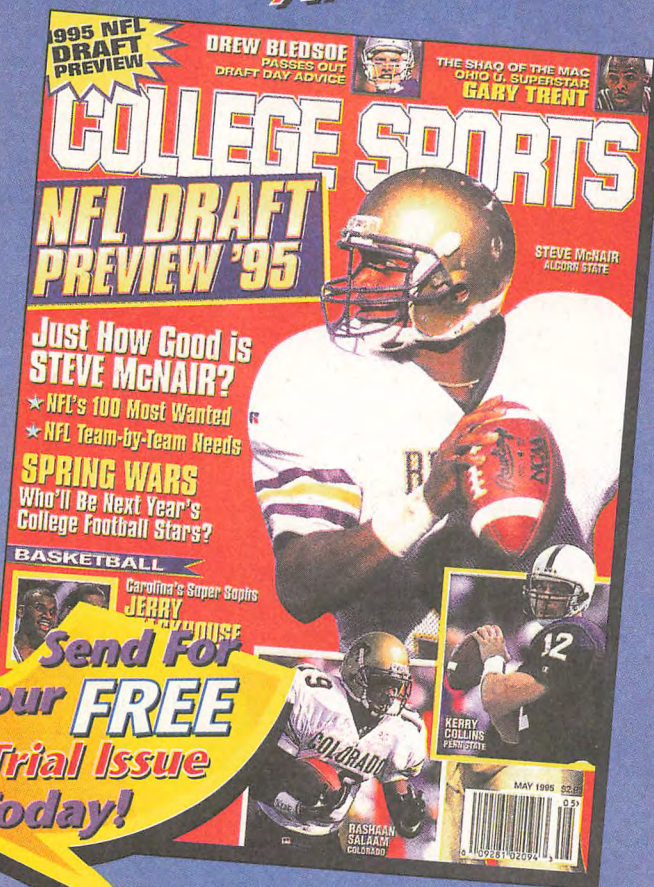
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PARENTS

this quest, of course. Joining him at the hip is Seattle's Rick Mirer, the former Notre Dame quarterback who was the second player selected in the 1993 NFL Draft just behind Bledsoe. That accident of fate has wedded them for all time, but the aging of Marino, Elway and Kelly just as Bledsoe and Mirer arrived has brought them even closer together as both friends and friendly rivals.

"I hope the comparisons between us continue," Bledsoe admitted, "because that means we're both being successful. Our goal is to take over from those guys, and in order to do it, we both know we need to win some games and move our teams into the playoffs. Hopefully, one of us at least will win a championship."

Mirer had been a starter from the first

day he arrived in Seattle until he injured his left thumb last Dec. 15, ending a streak of 29 consecutive starts. At the time of the injury, which required surgery, his 1.8 percent interception rate (seven interceptions in 381 attempts) was the league's lowest.

He also passed for 2,151 yards and 11 touchdowns. Those numbers lifted Mirer's two-year total to 4,984 passing yards and 23 touchdowns, respectable numbers on a rebuilding team where he has been sacked 74 times.

Hovering just beside Mirer and Bledsoe is Green Bay Packers quarterback Brett Favre, a volatile young man who seemed to finally gain control over the fires inside him last season and began to approach the level of consistency predicted for him because of

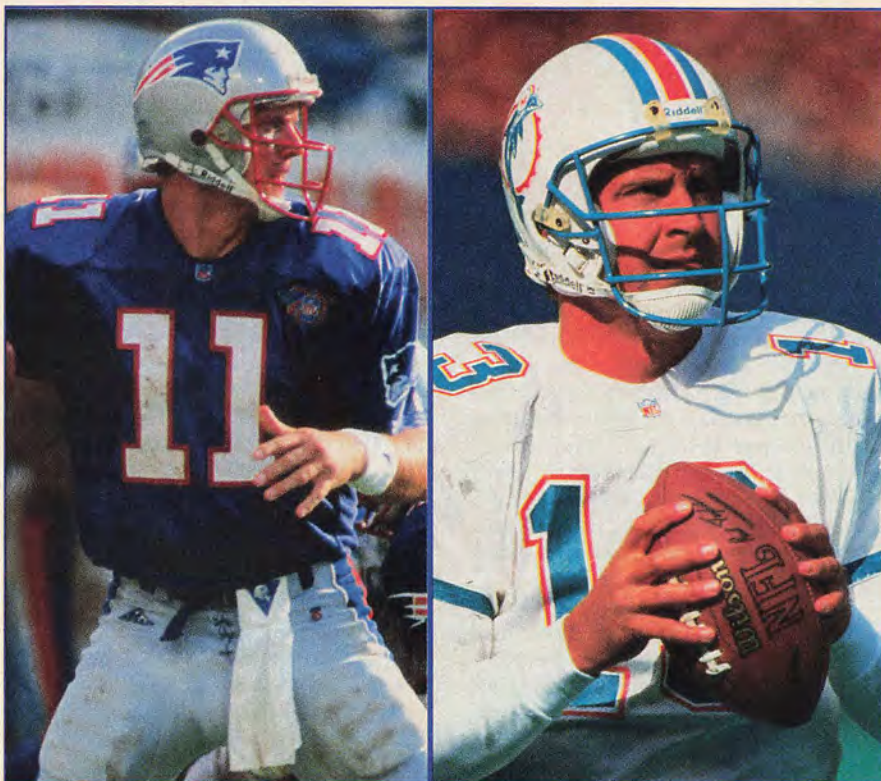
the strength of his arm and his athleticism.

Last year was the best in Favre's four-year career, as he finished third in the NFC in passing yards (3,882) and had the third-lowest interception percentage in the NFC (2.4 percent). He also ranked second in the conference in touchdown passes (33), attempts (582) and completions (363), doing his best passing when a playoff spot hung in the balance. Over the final nine games, Favre threw only seven interceptions while delivering 24 touchdown passes to push his team into the playoffs for the second straight season. He helped clinch that spot with two brilliant performances in late wins over Atlanta and Tampa Bay. The finish to the Falcons' game showed the kind of magic required of a quarterback hoping to move into the circle now occupied by Marino, Elway and Kelly.

Needing a win to keep the team's playoff hopes alive, Favre engineered a come-from-behind 67-yard drive over the final 1:58. After completing six of nine throws for 58 yards, he capped things by scrambling for a diving, 9-yard touchdown run with 14 seconds on the clock for a 21-17 victory that kept Green Bay alive. It was the kind of



Seattle's Rick Mirer and Green Bay's Brett Favre are aiming for top billing as the NFL's young QB of the future.



SUDDEN IMPACT

Few NFL quarterbacks have had as immediate an impact on the game as the Patriots' Drew Bledsoe and the Dolphins' Dan Marino, two AFC East rivals. Here's how they compare after their first two seasons in the league:

DREW BLEDSOE

YEAR	G/S	ATT.	COMP.	PCT.	YDS.	TD	INT
1993	13/12	429	214	49.9	2,494	15	15
1994	16/16	691*	400	57.9	4,555	25	27
Totals	29/28	1,120	614	54.8	7,049	40	42

DAN MARINO

YEAR	G/S	ATT.	COMP.	PCT.	YDS.	TD	INT
1983	11/9	296	173	58.4	2,210	20	6
1984	16/16	564	362	64.2	5,084*	48*	17
Totals	27/25	860	535	62.2	7,294	68	23

*NFL records

comeback Joe Montana made a staple of his game during his glory days in San Francisco. And for Favre, it may have been a defining moment in his own burgeoning career.

Yet Favre's improving numbers and Mirer's obvious promise have been overshadowed by Bledsoe. Only 23, he has already been to a Pro Bowl, become a millionaire and had his contract renegotiated. Other than winning a Super Bowl, what other symbols of greatness are left for him?

After leading the league last season in pass attempts (an NFL-record 691), completions (400) and yards (4,555), Bledsoe

became the youngest quarterback in history to have already passed for 7,000 yards and the youngest ever (22) to be selected to the Pro Bowl. To Marino, these credentials added up to the obvious.

"He has the potential to be a great quarterback for a long time," Marino said. "He's going to lead the wave of the next group of great quarterbacks in the National Football League. He's frightening."

He is frightening at times even to his coach, Bill Parcells. Bledsoe's remarkable arm has forced Parcells to abandon much of the ball-control approach that brought

him two Super Bowl championships with the New York Giants.

"If you've got three-point shooters, you can shoot three-pointers," Parcells explained. "If you've got home run hitters, you don't steal as many bases. I know he's only 23 . . . but 23, 15, it doesn't make any difference. He's the guy."

Bledsoe proved that over and over last year as he took the lowly Patriots on a season-ending seven-game winning streak that propelled them into the playoffs for the first time since 1986. One game stands out during the streak, a 41-17 win over four-time defending AFC champion Buffalo at Rich Stadium in December when Bledsoe brought the Pats back from an early 17-3 second-quarter deficit, at one point throwing on 14 consecutive plays.

If Bill Clinton were as successful at deficit reduction as Drew Bledsoe, the federal government would have its budget balanced by 1996, the same year many are predicting young Bledsoe could take the Patriots to the Super Bowl.

"If Drew plays like he did that Sunday [in Buffalo], I'm going to tell you, I don't have any problem throwing the ball 45 times a game," Parcells conceded.

Solid as that game was, it was nothing when compared to the remarkable afternoon Bledsoe had against the Minnesota Vikings in mid-November — the game that started the Patriots' winning streak. New England had fallen behind 20-3 at the half and appeared headed for its fifth-straight loss and another dismal season when the Legend of Drew Bledsoe wrote its first chapter. Throwing on almost every play, he set NFL records with 45 completions and 70 pass attempts while delivering 496 passing yards and three touchdowns, the last of which was a 14-yard pass to Kevin Turner in overtime for an improbable 26-20 victory.

By season's end, Bledsoe's peers elected him to the Pro Bowl, a turn of events that left him stunned despite a blistering start which saw him throw for 1,175 yards in the season's first three weeks. Still, when Bledsoe first learned he'd been selected, he was skeptical. Not that he doubted his skills or the impact of completing 400 passes. It was the source of the news that bothered him.

"[Receivers coach] Chris Palmer came up that morning and said, 'Hey, congratulations,'" Bledsoe recalled. "I said, 'For what?' When he told me I made the Pro Bowl, I was suspicious because Chris and [backup quarterback Scott] Zolak and I play a lot of practical jokes. I figured maybe he was going overboard."

It was no joke.

"I had no idea I'd get to the Pro Bowl," Bledsoe said. "Then, there I am sitting next to Elway at the pool in Hawaii realizing that when he started playing pro ball I was 11. It was exciting for me just to be with those guys I grew up watching."

"I didn't feel odd about being there, but

I did feel awed. It's awe-inspiring to be playing football with those guys. It was a strange feeling to be around all those guys knowing that 10 years ago I was 13 and just becoming aware of football and they were all playing in the NFL. You feel a lot of pride. You realize you may be pretty good at what you're doing."

It is also becoming awe-inspiring to his teammates to find themselves playing football with Bledsoe, as All-Pro tight end Ben Coates willingly attests. Last season, Coates broke the NFL record for receptions by a tight end with 96 and was one of five Patriots receivers to catch more than 50 passes, another league record.

"The first time I saw Drew in training camp his rookie year I knew I'd never played with anyone like him before," Coates said. "It's his height [6-foot-5] and the way he throws the ball so well. His ball gets up on you really fast. He'll hit you in the face mask if you're not careful."

More often, however, he'll hit you in the hands, something he's done so regularly in his first two years that Pittsburgh Steelers head coach Bill Cowher said, "He's one of the really uprising stars of the league. He'll be seeing a lot of Hawaii in the upcoming years."

He also will likely grow more comfortable with his appearances there, although it is the Super Bowl, not the Pro Bowl, that Bledsoe most wants to reach.

"Numbers are nice, but generally only if they go along with winning," Bledsoe said. "The reason for that is that if you're throwing for big numbers on a losing team you look at those numbers and think they must have thrown on every down or something. There's an asterisk there."

"Getting to the Pro Bowl last season was surprising to me but I don't see it as a negative in any way except maybe that it creates heightened expectations. But I'm trying to play to my own expectations and mine have always been higher than anyone else's anyway."

The Patriots have already decided they must ensure their future by making sure Bledsoe's future is in New England. Under the six-year contract he signed as a rookie, Bledsoe had a clause that could make him a restricted free agent as early as next season if he starts 10 games, which, barring injury, is surer than a high tax rate. Because of that, Patriots' owner Bob Kraft and Bledsoe's agent, Leigh Steinberg, have been trying to work out a contract extension that will avoid a wild free agent bidding war while keeping the Patriots under the salary cap and Bledsoe out of a situation where his presence forces his team to self-destruct.

"There were two things I expressed to Leigh when this became a topic," Bledsoe said. "I told him I wanted to stay in New England and I wanted to do it in such a way that we could still sign the other players we needed to win."

"They want to keep me here for quite a few years and I want to stay here. You talk with older players and they tell you all that's important is to win a championship. I feel we have as good a chance here as anywhere. I'd like to avoid the whole free agent situation next year. When you look at the strong teams — Dallas and San Francisco — they've been able to keep their important players."

To do that, Kraft likely will make Bledsoe the highest-paid player in the NFL before this season ends, but he is ready to do it because, like most NFL observers, what he sees when he watches Drew Bledsoe is not only his team's future, but a league's.

"Say it this way," Parcels said of his quarterback. "You start naming great players in the NFL and you get over 10 and you're reaching. Joe Montana has the pelts on his horse. This kid hasn't played a championship game yet."

"Does he have an arm to be great? Yes."

But there's a lot of guys at the bus station with great arms. Great is a rare quality. We don't have enough evidence yet."

Perhaps not, but the evidence that has already been gathered has convinced the long-suffering fans of New England that they have seen the future and it is Bledsoe. Not long after he first arrived, a Boston sports columnist wrote, "The way Drew Bledsoe played Friday night brings back recollections of the first time [hockey great Bobby] Orr played hockey here and when [Larry] Bird played basketball. We just knew."

What they knew in Boston is what they profess to know in Seattle and Green Bay as well — that when Dan Marino finally retires and John Elway says he's had enough, there will be new guns in town to replace them. **JT**

Ron Borges covers the New England Patriots for The Boston Globe.

BLEDSOE VS. OTHER NO. 1 QBs

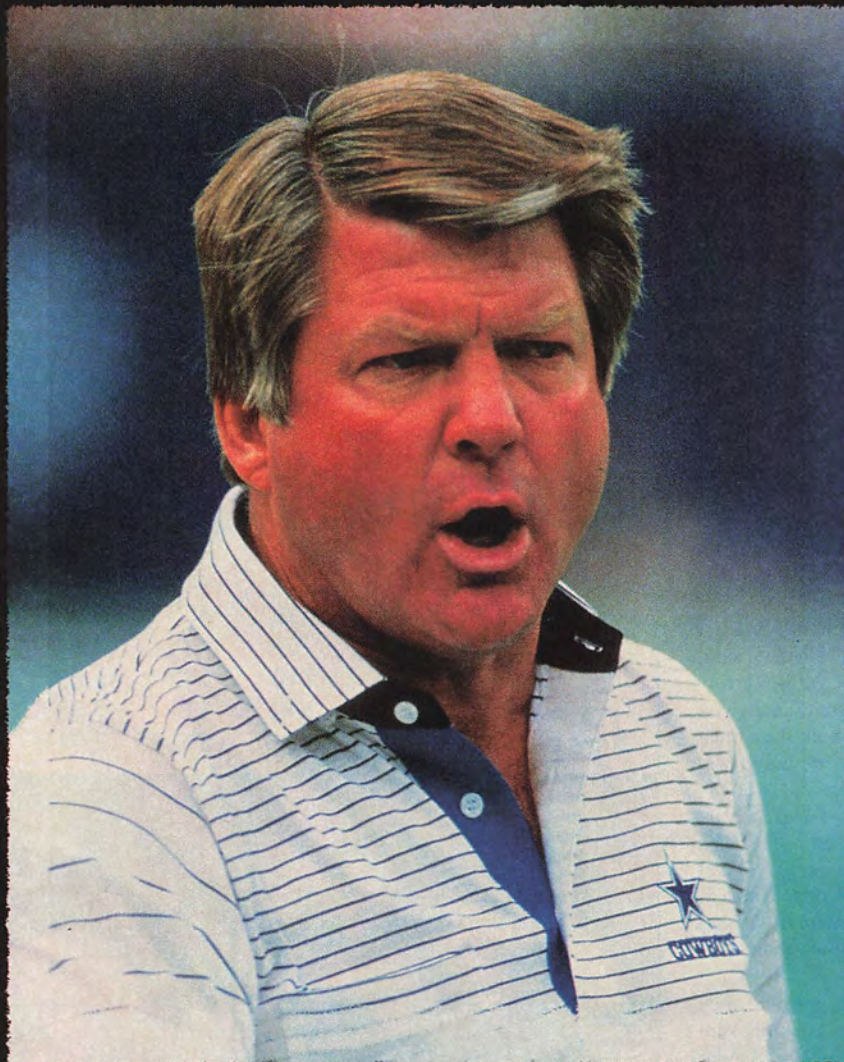
In 1993, the Patriots' Drew Bledsoe became the eighth quarterback since the AFL-NFL merger in 1970 to be taken with the first overall pick in the NFL draft. Here's how he stacks up with the other top picks after 29 games:

QUARTERBACK	ATT.	COMP.	YDS.	TD	INT
Drew Bledsoe '93	1,120	614	7,049	40	42
Vinny Testaverde '87	905	441	6,267	32	55
John Elway '83	755	402	5,134	34	33
Jeff George '90	819	473	5,062	26	25
Troy Aikman '89	796	443	4,956	25	39
Jim Plunkett '71	710	343	4,580	27	42
Terry Bradshaw '70	642	311	3,963	20	49
Steve Bartkowski '77	611	290	3,911	24	42



Drew Bledsoe was just 11 years old when John Elway was taken No. 1 overall in the 1983 NFL Draft.

AMERICA'S MOST WANTED



JIMMY JOHNSON

**THE FORMER COWBOYS COACH MAY BE
THE NFL'S HOTTEST FREE AGENT**

By TIM COWLISHAW

In this strange, new world of NFL free agency, the most sought after prize in 1994 was — let's be honest about this — more than a bit overweight, none too fast, less than 6-feet tall and, good grief, 51 years old. And the funniest thing is that, despite his considerable popularity and perceived value, no one had enough money to sign him.

So in 1995, James William Johnson is once again likely to be the hottest of commodities as the regular season winds down and owners of struggling teams begin to search for the keys to Super Bowl success. Johnson may not possess all the answers, but the two Super Bowl championships he brought to the Dallas Cowboys in just five seasons make him a candidate for Coach of the Decade, even if he spends half of it on television.

Johnson will be in his second season with Fox and HBO as an analyst this year. The reviews he earned in 1994 were generally favorable, although they fell short of his work on the football field. And he was tempted to return to the sidelines after just one year away from the game. Oh, how he was tempted.

Of those who pursued him the strongest — a group that included Tampa Bay, the Los Angeles/St. Louis Rams and Houston — no team went after Johnson as purposefully as the Philadelphia Eagles. New owner Jeffrey Lurie was intent to make a splash worthy of, well, a Hollywood producer, which is what he is.

Lurie's talks with Johnson in the spring of 1994 were of an information-gathering nature for the rookie owner. But the more Lurie gathered, the stronger his desire to have Johnson coaching the Eagles grew. There were frequent talks between the Eagles' front office and Nick Christin, Johnson's Miami-based attorney. Eventually, they produced an offer that would have given Johnson total and complete authority over the football operation, the ability to step aside as head coach into the role of general manager after three years and handpick his successor, and a compensation package that would have paid him in the range of \$4 million a year.

"Everybody threw out all kinds of figures and it was easy to say that you weren't going to come back and coach," Johnson said. "But when the offer is right there in front of you, it's not so easy to turn down. It was every responsibility that I would want to have in writing, and financially, it was more than any professional coach in any sport had ever been paid."

Johnson announced he was going to stay out of coaching and remain with Fox on the network's pre-game show Dec. 18, but word that Johnson was staying already had leaked during the week.

"It wasn't that difficult to turn down because of the fact that I didn't want to live there," Johnson said.

So, Johnson will continue his coast-to-coast commutes on a weekly basis (there will be no more remotes for Fox in front of

his fish tanks). Each Friday, he will make the one-hour drive from his home in the Florida Keys to Miami, then fly to Los Angeles to begin preparations for the Sunday telecast. Still, that's a lot less preparation than he dealt with week in and week out during his previous 30 years as a football coach.

Johnson's Fox contract, now worth \$1 million per year, runs through the 1997 season. Is it possible he will return to the NFL sidelines prior to that contract's expiration, possibly as early as 1996?

"It's going to have to be a year-to-year thing," Johnson said. "But, right now, I'm extremely happy doing what I'm doing."

How Johnson became a *former* coach in 1994 is still a subject of much debate, especially in Dallas. Owner Jerry Jones said he

at the owners' meetings," Johnson said. "Something could have flared up. Both Jerry and I were to the point where it wouldn't have taken a lot for us to separate. Whether or not that would have happened, whether the relationship could have gotten better, I couldn't say."

Said Jones: "It's wrong for anyone to say that my comments in Orlando or Jimmy's actions there are the reason he's not here. He's not here today because I don't want him to be here. Whether or not he wanted to stay isn't an issue because it wasn't in his control."

What both men agree upon is that Johnson wasn't likely to fulfill the five years remaining on his 10-year contract with the Cowboys. Johnson had grown weary of



Former teammates in college and the pros, Jerry Jones (right) and Jimmy Johnson were football's Dynamic Duo — or so it seemed.

did the right thing by getting rid of his former college teammate. Johnson said he did the right thing by telling Jones he wanted out and to settle his contract.

Jones maintains that, despite the team's rapid rise to success under Johnson, a coaching change was being contemplated as far back as the fall of 1992, even before Dallas had won its first Super Bowl under Johnson. And Jones also insists that the incidents at the March 1994 NFL owners' meetings in Orlando, Fla., only accelerated Johnson's inevitable departure. Johnson says that without those events serving as a catalyst — principally Jones' statement that 500 coaches could win a Super Bowl with Dallas' talent — he would have coached the Cowboys for at least one more season.

"I really don't know what would have happened last year if nothing had happened

what he viewed as Jones' meddling and distortions of the truth fed to the media. Jones was tiring of being asked questions about Johnson's alliance with Jacksonville and about the coach's occasional putdowns of the owner's thriftiness.

When Jones went over to Johnson's table at a party in Orlando and offered a toast to a number of former Dallas coaches and employees — a group that included Philadelphia's director of football administration Bob Ackles and television producer Brenda Bushell, who had been fired by Jones — the Cowboys' owner was greeted with shrugs. Jones stormed away from the table, saying he would go toast someplace else, then later made statements critical of Johnson to a bar crowd that included at least four reporters.

Johnson said he didn't think much of it when Jones stalked away from the table in Orlando.

AMERICA'S MOST WANTED



Despite a reported five-year, \$20 million contract offer from Philadelphia, Johnson chose not to return to the sidelines.

"I don't think anyone at the table felt like it was that big of a deal. [But] the next morning is when I heard what Jerry had said in a bar. I was irritated and I was hurt. I felt like I had given a lot of myself for the Cowboys to be in the position they were at the time and still are. Once Jerry confirmed what he had said, I wasn't real sure I could work for him and be 100 percent loyal."

Jones felt Johnson's loyalty was long gone and that their inability to communicate on even minor issues was going to disrupt the team's chemistry in 1995.

"I could see that our situation was no longer long-term," Jones said. "I could see what was coming. I didn't want to wait until it went flat and then have to get out on the freeway to change it."

Johnson left the meetings and flew back to Miami where he had been staying. Johnson already had purchased the home in the Keys but was not planning to make that his full-time residence until after the 1994 season.

"I called Jerry and got him out of a meeting," Johnson said. "I told him to settle the contract, that I wanted out. He said, 'Are you quitting?' I said no. Then he said that he wasn't going to fire me."

Johnson wasn't quitting because he would have been walking away without compensation. Jones wasn't about to fire him because he would have owed him \$3.9 million for the remainder of his contract.

Back in Dallas the following Monday, the two met for several hours and narrowed their five options to two, but could not reach a decision.

The next morning Johnson was incensed to read in a newspaper that Jones

had told Johnson to "commit or quit," that the coach was being told to stay for five more years or move on.

"That was nothing like what we had talked about," Johnson said. "It was the same old thing, Jerry telling me one thing and then running off to tell the media or certain members of the media another. I just couldn't believe what he said, so that morning I told him, 'Jerry, settle the contract.'"

Within a few hours, the two were sitting side by side in the Cowboys' meeting room, detailing their breakup in a press conference. Johnson defended Jones throughout the session, cutting off questions that appeared to be critical of Jones.

"Jerry told me before we went in there, 'I'm going to take a beating, you've got to help me.' With a \$2 million check in my pocket, I was happy to do that," Johnson said. "I would have kept doing it until he started bashing me."

Jones believes Johnson's criticism came first, but that's just another matter in which the two do not see eye-to-eye. Perhaps their only common ground is that both insist they are better off today.

Said Johnson: "There's no question it's been great for me. I've got peace of mind. I think it would have been a very frustrating year for me to stay in Dallas and work under those conditions. That doesn't mean we wouldn't have won games. As talented as that team is and as weak as the NFC East is, we would have won the division and had the home-field advantage at least for one game. I guarantee you we would have made it to the NFC championship game. Now what happens there is up for debate."

Said Jones: "I have a good feeling today, the kind that I had when Jimmy and I were

starting out in 1989 and 1990. The difference is we've got a great team now. A year ago, my enthusiasm was diminished. I'm recharged now. I'm addressing issues with the team with nothing else in the back of my mind. We've got this coaching staff in place for several years now, and we've got one of the great coaches of our time leading the way."

For Jones to be proven correct, Barry Switzer must lead the Cowboys to at least one Super Bowl victory while Troy Aikman, Emmitt Smith and Michael Irvin remain in their prime. The club again suffered significant offseason losses in free agency and, if that trend continues, Dallas will not stay at or near the top for long.

If Johnson's exit has diminished the Cowboys in any way, he has not yet chosen to take his skills elsewhere. It won't be a surprise if he's coaching against the Cowboys by as early as 1996. But Johnson, who turns 52 this July, maintains that when he does return to coaching, it won't be for long.

"After discussions with some of my close friends in the business, primarily Dave Wannstedt and Norv Turner, people who know my strengths and weaknesses, I think moving in the direction of being a general manager is the logical step for me. Whether that would mean coaching a team for one year or two years or three years before stepping aside to become the full-time GM, I'm not sure," Johnson said.

"But knowing my personality, it would probably be best if I worked directly with an owner and not with a general manager as a go-between."

Tim Cowlshaw covers the Cowboys for The Dallas Morning News.



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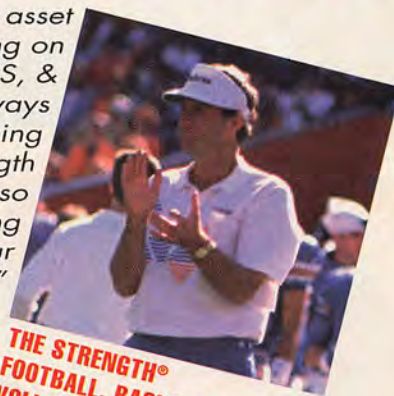
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GRAND MARSHALL



Indianapolis' Marshall Faulk Was A Step Ahead Of Most Running Backs As A Rookie

By MICHAEL BRADLEY

By the time Marshall Faulk has taken a handoff, the first defender is already beaten. The great ones are like that. They solve problems in bunches rather than in some linear progression.

Instead of conquering opposing tacklers one-by-one, Faulk chooses an exponential approach. He dismisses the first guy before the ball is snapped and moves on to the second and third. By the time he reaches the end zone, Faulk may have abused four or five players, not knowing what he did to any of them. He is not a man bound by process, rather result.

Maybe that's why the move from college to professional football didn't overwhelm him. Some NFL rookies may look good for a while, but the 16-game grind eventually wears them down, and they finish the season speaking of revelations about focus, conditioning and the seriousness of the pro game. None of that applied to Faulk, who was strong throughout his magical first season with the Indianapolis Colts and still had enough left to dominate the Pro Bowl like

no other back had before him.

From the moment the Colts made him the second pick overall in the 1994 Draft, Faulk was worrying about that second tackler. The whole idea of putting on an NFL uniform and becoming a high-priced target meant little to Faulk. He was there because he was ready to be there, ready to produce.

"Marshall may be 22, but he acts like he's 28," Colts coach Ted Marchibroda said. "In the locker room, it was like he was never a rookie. He could mingle with the vets on the team, and it was like a mutual admiration society for them."

Anyone with a horseshoe on his helmet or his heart had to love Faulk last year. The 5-foot-10, 200-pounder gained 1,282 yards on 314 carries and scored 12 touchdowns in 1994, single-handedly lifting the Colts from the bottom of the NFL rushing food chain — where they had wallowed for three straight years — to fourth overall in rushing yards. He caught 52 passes for another 522 yards to give him 1,804 from scrimmage — 40.9 percent of the Colts' offense.

Faulk was named the AFC's Offensive Rookie of the Year and was a Pro Bowl starter. While in Honolulu, Faulk broke the all-star game's rushing record by blasting through cavalier NFC defenders for 180 yards on just 13 carries.

Despite all of that production, there were those who criticized Marchibroda for not using Faulk enough — with the rookie joining the chorus at times. They argued that the Colts could have improved their 8-8 record — up from 4-12 in '93 — had Faulk carried the ball more than 19.6 times per game. What they failed to realize was that only four running backs in the NFL touched the football more often (combined rushing and receiving) than Faulk. And though every football player seems to want more these days, Faulk now appears satisfied with his opening salvo.

"I don't think I'm going to comment on whether I got the ball enough or too much," Faulk said. "I was exposed pretty well. Ted used me nicely within the offense, and I was pleased."

If Marchibroda did indeed hold Faulk back during the 1994 season, the Colts' opponents certainly didn't notice it. His presence in the Indianapolis attack forced rival defensive coordinators to devise new ways of stopping the Colts, who had been pretty bland and predictable during the past few years. It wasn't like Marchibroda was doing anything new or revolutionary, but by using Faulk in both the tailback and flanker positions, he was able to spread out defenses and create some mismatches.

When in the backfield, Faulk profited from the NFL's pass-fearing defensive schemes, which rarely put more than eight players along the line of scrimmage — at San Diego State, Faulk saw nine-man fronts on a regular basis. When he lined up



Faulk made an instant impact in the NFL, leading all rookie backs with 1,282 yards.

outside, Faulk was covered by cornerbacks once teams learned that their linebackers and safeties were overmatched.

"Basically, he's one of the few guys who have it all," Marchibroda said. "He's strong enough at 200 pounds. He has quickness and speed and sees the field very well. He can get the job done receiving, and as he understands the game and sees more things, he is just going to get better."

From the time he signed his seven-year, \$17.2-million contract (complete with a whopping \$5.1-million bonus), Faulk was under extreme pressure in Indianapolis. The Colts hadn't had a running game of any note since Eric Dickerson had taken his petulant act away from the Hoosier Dome. Terms like "savior" and "The Marshall Faulk Era" accompanied him to training camp once he signed on. Fans, teammates and coaches expected instant success, and Faulk was ready to give it to them.

Faulk wasn't the typical underclassman who entered the NFL early and blew his first paycheck on six cars. One of Faulk's first moves once he signed was to establish the Marshall Faulk Foundation, dedicated to helping abused children in his native

New Orleans. And after the season, he headed right back to San Diego to work on completing his degree. How many Pro Bowl MVPs do that?

"You didn't have to tell him anything more than once," Colts running backs coach Gene Huey said. "He has a lot of pride and wants to excel, so he wanted to do everything right. He wanted to know every little thing that was expected of him."

"He was odd for a rookie. Some guys come in riding high on their accomplishments in college and find that everything is faster and more physical on this level. Marshall wasn't like that."

Faulk offered no disclaimers or excuses about his late arrival to camp. Faulk knew the pressure would be there, and it didn't bother him. His rugged upbringing in New Orleans had taught him all about surviving tough situations. Anyone who could find a way out of a treacherous urban nightmare could handle a few high expectations.

"Coming to Indianapolis made things a little easier for me," Faulk said. "With the rushing statistics they had in 1993, I knew I could do better than that."

"I'm not a savior, but I knew if Marshall

came up and did what he was capable of, I would be satisfied. I can only do what Marshall can do — no more, no less. I wanted to work hard and try not to be a flop.”

The Pittsburgh Steelers’ defense certainly didn’t gain a reputation in 1994 as the best thing since the Mean Joe Greene and Toothless Jack Lambert Era by letting rookie backs gallop through them for 100 yards. When the Colts visited Three Rivers Stadium last September, Faulk had already victimized Houston and Tampa Bay for a total of 247 yards, topping the century mark in both instances. The hoopla surrounding Faulk’s quick start had made it to Pittsburgh, and the proud

1994 TOP ROOKIE RBs

PLAYER, TEAM	ATT	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Marshall Faulk, Ind.	314	1,282	4.1	52	11
Errict Rhett, T.B.	284	1,011	3.6	27	7
Bam Morris, Pitt.	198	836	4.2	20	7
Mario Bates, N.O.	151	579	3.8	40	6
Greg Hill, K.C.	141	574	4.1	20	1
Raymont Harris, Chi.	123	464	3.8	13	1
Charlie Garner, Phi.	109	399	3.7	28	3



The Colts and Faulk are looking to take the next big step into the playoffs.

Steeler defenders weren’t about to let the party continue on their watch.

Successful defenses win by intimidation — physical and mental — so the Steelers decided to rough Faulk up as much as they could and then spend some time talking to him about it. Safety Rod Woodson appeared to be the appointed designated trashman for the afternoon, and spent plenty of time yammering at Faulk. Though the Steelers won 31-21 and Faulk only got the ball 15 times, he still averaged four yards per carry (he gained 61 yards) and didn’t succumb to the pressure.

“He was never a guy we had to settle down on the sideline,” Huey said. “Woodson and those guys in Pittsburgh rattled him a little bit, but he kept his composure pretty well.”

Faulk’s ability to handle pressure, fame and all kinds of attention can be traced directly to his high school coach, Wayne Reese, whose early morning conditioning regimen at George Washington Carver High School in New Orleans formed the foundation for Faulk’s discipline. Reese’s routines also kept him from finding other, shall we say, less-productive things to do in the bleak urban landscape of the Desire Projects in the city’s notorious Ninth Ward. Every morning at 7 a.m., Reese would gather his Carver team for an intense workout and then send it off to class.

Anybody who says high school kids don’t want (and need) discipline should talk to Marshall Faulk. It is because of Reese, with whom he remains close, that he chose to devote his considerable talents to football, instead of wasting them elsewhere.

Faulk was an exceptional running back at Carver, but his sub-six foot size scared off most collegiate recruiters, who preferred to view him as a cornerback — he intercepted 11 passes his senior year. He could have played defense at Nebraska or Miami, but he went west to San Diego State to run the ball, proving that recruiting is indeed an inexact science. Faulk starred immediately and became the first freshman to lead the nation in rushing (158.8 yards per game). By the time he was a sophomore, it was

clear Faulk was a special talent — even though he played in the Western Athletic Conference, which isn't too renowned for stopping the run.

"There was never any doubt," Huey said. "He came in here and proved he belonged."

After leading the country in rushing again as a sophomore, Faulk decided to stay for his junior year at San Diego State, partly because he would have had to challenge the NFL's early-entry rule, which allows only third-year sophomores (Faulk hadn't redshirted) to ditch school for the pros. After an offseason of working out with the wide receivers and defensive backs — "They're always the best-conditioned athletes on the team," Faulk said — he returned for a junior season of eight and nine-man fronts. Despite the added attention, Faulk still gained 1,530 yards, scored 24 touchdowns and finished third in the nation in all-purpose yardage with 2,174. It was clear Faulk was ready for the next level.

"Once I got bored with college, the only thing left to do was go to the NFL," Faulk said matter-of-factly. "I knew I had to mature before I got there, because I would be expected to step in and play right away."

The expectations were a little higher than that. Faulk was considered an instant

antidote for the anemic Colts ground game. He was inserted into the starting lineup on draft day, dispatching second-year back Roosevelt Potts (711 yards in '93) to fullback, a role at which the 242-pound Potts excelled — even if he didn't relish the demotion.

Even though he held out until late July, Faulk arrived at the Colts' Anderson (Ind.) University training headquarters prepared to play.

"Marshall attended a mini-camp after he was drafted, and we put in small parts of our offense," Marchibroda said. "When he arrived for training camp, he remembered everything from the spring."

Since running back isn't as complicated a position for a professional novice to learn as quarterback or offensive tackle, Faulk succeeded almost immediately. He gained 143 yards against Houston in the Colts' opener on 23 carries and picked up 104 on 18 chances against the Buccaneers. Faulk sustained his production through the season, topping 100 yards two other times and 90 on a pair of occasions.

Faulk's considerable and diverse abilities tested rival defenses in a number of ways. And though coaches around the league differed on his most important attribute, they were unanimous in their praise for Faulk.

Marchibroda asserts Faulk's ability to achieve top speed so quickly sets him apart, while Miami defensive coordinator Tom Olivadotti cites the halfback's skill at exploiting small cracks in defenses for huge gains.

"If you allow any creases in your defense, he can explode," Olivadotti said.

New England defensive coordinator Al Groh is impressed with Faulk's lateral bursts that slip him past defenders, and Colts' GM Bill Tobin loves Faulk's soft hands, a big reason Indianapolis spent the second pick on him.

Faulk agrees with his fans but refuses to be characterized as a certain type of back. When he gets the ball, he runs. There are no predetermined paths or master plans. He gets from point A to point B and lets someone else handle the descriptions.

"It's situational, not a style," he said. "It depends on what I'm seeing and what's going on. How do I need to run the ball? Do I need power? Is it a sweep, and do I have to get around the corner fast? Is it a zone play where I find a hole?"

"You have backs in the league who are good running inside or outside. I'm a back who's good at running." **JT**

Michael Bradley is a free-lance writer based in Philadelphia.

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COVERAGE



LET'S MAKE A DEAL

IT WAS A HEAVY FIRST DAY OF TRADING AT THIS YEAR'S NFL DRAFT

By **DAVID SEIGERMAN**
and **DAVE ALLEN**

Somewhere in the Cincinnati Bengals organization, there is a football historian with his fingers crossed. When the Bengals acquired the top pick of the 1995 NFL Draft from the expansion Carolina Panthers, it marked only the 11th time in the draft's 60-year history that the No. 1 overall selection changed hands. If the previous 10 occasions are any indication, the Bengals' selection of Ki-Jana Carter was a jackpot.

"They have a young, exciting, explosive offense, and I think I am going to be a key addition to the team," said Carter, who finished second in the 1994 Heisman Trophy voting as a junior at Penn State.

Of the 32 first-round picks, 13 changed hands. The first time the top spot was swapped was back in 1941, when Chicago chose UCLA running back Tom Harmon with a pick it acquired from Philadelphia. Other players joining Harmon on the distinguished list include Bubba Smith, Ron Yary, Ed Jones and Earl Campbell, as well as active stars Irving Fryar, Jeff George and Russell Maryland.

Cincy is hoping Carter adds his name to that roster of All-Pros. The Bengals had the top pick in the '94 draft, but bypassed eventual Rookie of the Year Marshall Faulk for defensive tackle Dan Wilkinson. This time, they couldn't afford to let another franchise back get away.

"I think this is definitely sweeter than getting the Heisman," Carter said about being drafted No. 1.

Carolina wound up with the fifth pick and still got its first choice, Penn State quarterback Kerry Collins. The Panthers, along with fellow expansionist Jack-

sonville, were one of the most active teams in what turned out to be one of the wildest drafts in recent memory. There were trades, drug allegations, shocking selections, trades, on-line coverage and more trades. When it was all finished, the battle lines for the 1995 NFL season had been drawn. Here's a breakdown of how each of the 30 NFL franchises fared in stocking their squads for the upcoming season:

THE GOOD

These teams helped themselves substantially in the draft.

Carolina Panthers: The Panthers almost certainly would have taken Collins with the top overall pick, so trading down and getting an extra second-round pick was an added bonus. With that second-round pick, Carolina chose Northeast Louisiana defensive end Shawn King (6-foot-3, 278 pounds), who'll team with former Giant Mike Fox to give the Panthers a decent pass rush.

Collins has the potential to be a franchise quarterback now that he has worked with quarterback guru Bill Walsh to eliminate the most talked-about hitch this side of the PGA tour.

"All anybody wanted to talk about was the hitch," Collins said. "I knew it was bad when I pulled up to the airport in Philly and the guy taking my bag [asked], 'What's up with that hitch?' I was like, Oh my God, just take my bags."

"We're past that. Obviously, the Panthers don't feel that my throwing motion is a problem, and I'm glad for that."

Cincinnati Bengals: The last team to acquire the top spot in the NFL draft from an expansion team wound up with Tony Dorsett. The Bengals are hoping lightning strikes twice with their selection of Carter. Fellow draftees Melvin Tuten and Ryan Grigson will be



Penn State running back Ki-Jana Carter is the feature back the Bengals coveted.

responsible for creating the openings for Carter. Somehow, BYU quarterback John Walsh plummeted to the seventh round; he was a wise pick-up for a team counting on either Jeff Blake or David Klingler.

Houston Oilers: The good news is that Steve McNair is perfect for the Oilers' run-and-shoot. The bad news, though, is that the system will never produce a champion in the NFL. Still, McNair was a no-brainer — he's got the arm to be a strong pocket passer and the elusive scrambling ability he'll need to stay alive behind Houston's shaky offensive line. With Lorenzo White's departure, Texas A&M's Rodney Thomas, who the Oilers stole in the third round, will get his share of carries.

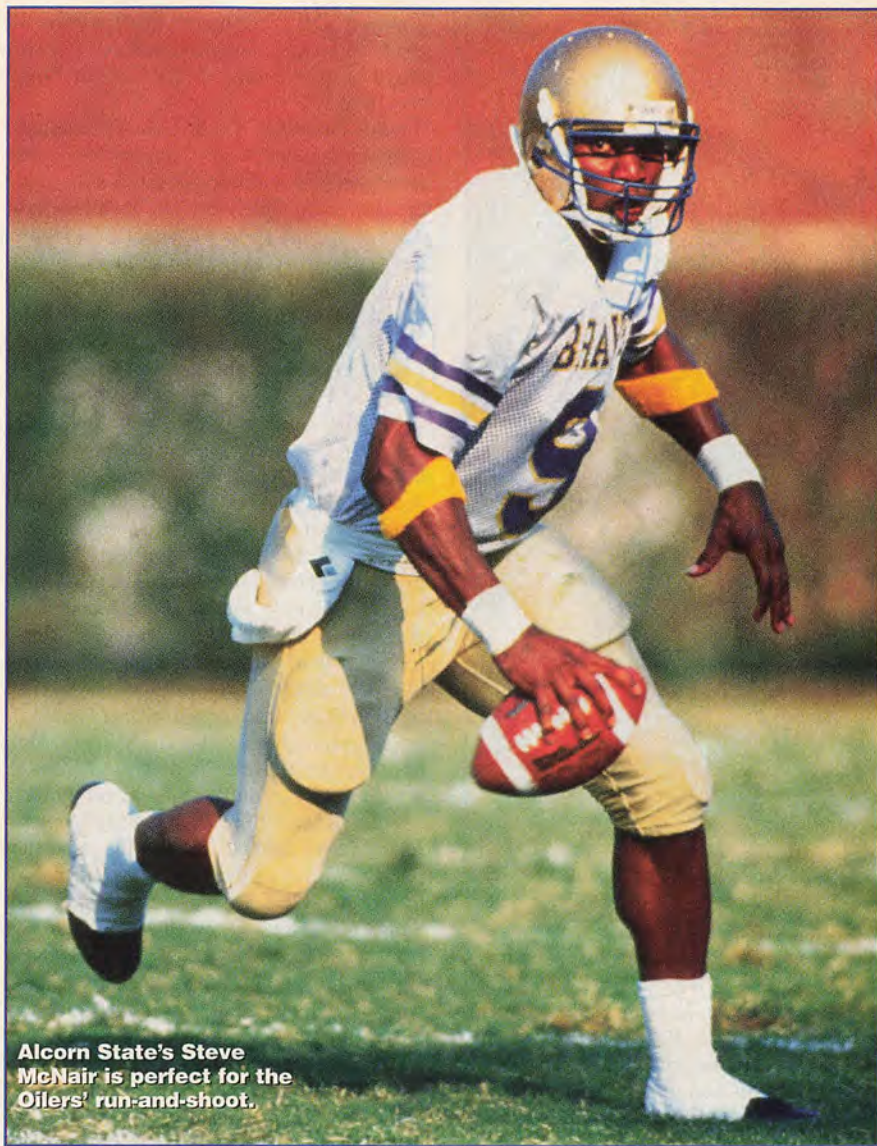
Indianapolis Colts: Last year, the Colts picked the flashy Faulk. This time around, they bulked up with defensive tackle Ellis Johnson, tight end Ken Dilger and fullback Zack Crockett, a steal of a third-round pick. Indianapolis' draft-day acquisition of Craig Erickson may be the best move of all and made the Colts an immediate contender for a playoff spot.

Jacksonville Jaguars: The key to building a team from scratch is to bring in as many good young players as possible; Tom Coughlin backed his truck up to the Paramount Theater and drove away with a bundle. Tony Boselli was taken higher than any offensive lineman since Tony Mandarich — "There's absolutely no comparison between us," said Boselli, "except for the first name" — but figures to stick around the NFL about 12 years longer than the Incredible Bulk did. Coughlin traded up to get James "Little Man" Stewart, perhaps the most versatile back in the draft, and nabbed tackle Brian DeMarco and quarterback Rob Johnson with mid-round picks.

Philadelphia Eagles: Ray Rhodes desperately wanted big-time pass rusher Mike Mamula of Boston College and got him by trading up in the first round. Mamula's superhuman feats at the scouting combine in April will have scouts talking for years to come. His vertical jump was like that of another Mike's (Jordan), and the 6-4, 250-pound defensive end ran the 40-yard dash in 4.5 seconds. Notre Dame corner Bobby Taylor has great size (6-3, 208) and speed (4.39) and fills a big need in the defensive backfield with Eric Allen's departure.

Pittsburgh Steelers: Pittsburgh methodically addressed every concern, starting with tight end where the reliable Mark Bruener replaces Eric Green. The Steelers also picked up guard Brenden Stai, whose run-blocking skills from his Nebraska days will translate well into coach Bill Cowher's bulldozing offense. They also landed quarterback Kordell Stewart, who might be as nifty a catch as the one Michael Westbrook made against Michigan on a last-second pass from Stewart.

St. Louis Rams: No one's looking forward to playing the Rams anymore, not with Sean Gilbert and Kevin Carter on the same



Alcorn State's Steve McNair is perfect for the Oilers' run-and-shoot.

defensive line. Florida's Carter (6-6, 274) was the first defensive lineman taken in the draft — a group which includes Mamula, Warren Sapp, Derrick Alexander and Luther Elliss — and gives the Rams a big-time pass rusher. Speaking of big, the Rams landed offensive tackle Zach Wiegert (6-4, 300) of Nebraska and guard Jesse James (6-4, 325) of Mississippi State in the second round.

San Francisco 49ers: Only the 49ers could have one pick in the first three rounds and do better than anyone else. The 49ers jumped 20 places in the first round to grab Jerry Rice's successor at wide receiver, UCLA's J.J. Stokes. Ironically, they did the same thing 10 years ago to get Rice. While Stokes doesn't have the speed of Westbrook or Joey Gallowsay, he's got the reach (6-4½).

Tampa Bay Buccaneers: There's no truth to the rumor the Bucs started the predraft talk about Sapp's seven failed drug tests so he could fall to them at No. 12 (even after trading down from the seventh spot). If Sapp is clean like he says he is, then the

Bucs will make everyone look as dumb as Miami did in 1983 when QB Dan Marino fell to them at No. 24. Sapp was believed to be going as high as No. 5 (in a trade with the Jets) before the drug rumors came out on the eve of the draft.

"Anybody who says Warren Sapp is the 12th best player in this draft is on drugs," said Sapp's agent, Drew Rosenhaus.

Added Sapp: "It won't take them [the teams that passed on him] long to remember how good I am."

THE NOT SO BAD

These teams filled some holes.

Arizona Cardinals: The Cardinals' best move was made a day before the draft, when they traded their first-round pick and RB Ron Moore to the Jets for Pro Bowl receiver Rob Moore (no relation). They then added Auburn WR Frank Sanders in the second round. Both are big, athletic receivers. Arizona must now hope QB Dave Krieg performs like he did in Detroit a year ago.



Chicago fans can bear-ly wait to see Heisman Trophy winner Rashaan Salaam.

Buffalo Bills: Keeping Jim Kelly healthy — especially with Frank Reich having departed for Carolina — is of dire importance, and the selection of Pitt lineman Reuben Brown will help the cause. Brown is a physically strong 300-pounder who can play tackle or guard, which is fortuitous since Will Wolford and Harold Ballard are both gone. The Bills also picked up a couple of players in quarterback Todd Collins and defensive end Shannon Clavelle who could soon both be asked to step in for veteran stars such as Kelly and Bruce Smith, respectively.

Chicago Bears: The Bears' offense could put you to sleep the past few years. Not so anymore. Chicago got a game-breaker at running back when Heisman Trophy winner Rashaan Salaam fell to them at No. 21. Florida wide receiver Jack Jackson is another big-play performer. The most interesting pick is West Virginia punter Todd Sauerbrun, a second-rounder. Sauerbrun led the nation in punting last season with a 48.4-yard average but will be most effective in the pros as a kickoff man — 41 of his 52 kickoffs went into the end zone.

Detroit Lions: The Lions signed free-agent defensive tackle Henry Thomas away from Minnesota but still had to be pleasantly surprised to find Utah's Elliss (6-5, 290) still available at No. 20. Elliss can play tackle or end. The Lions received another gift when the Chargers dealt them their top pick in '96 for Detroit's No. 2 this year. Linebacker Stephen Boyd of Boston Col-

lege is a Chris Spielman-type. Sixth-round pick Cory Schlesinger scored two touchdowns for Nebraska in its Orange Bowl win over Miami.

Miami Dolphins: Time may be running short for Marino to get back to the Super Bowl, and he'll never get there if he's on the turf or the sidelines. The Dolphins got their main man some bodyguards in Houston tackle Billy Milner and Indiana guard Andrew Greene. Marino loves to throw to his tight ends, and sure-handed Pete Mitchell of BC could have an impact as Eric Green's backup. The Dolphins could have used a consistent running back, but didn't feel there was one worth reaching for when their turn rolled around.

Minnesota Vikings: Sure, it was surprising to see the Jets pass on Sapp. But it was even more shocking to see the Vikes pass him by. He would have been the perfect replacement for Thomas. Instead, the Vikings stayed in Florida and chose FSU's Alexander, a defensive end. With its second first-round choice, Minnesota went with large offensive tackle Korey Stringer (6-4, 345) of Ohio State. Stringer is a steal at No. 24 if he can control his weight. The Vikings, who hoped to see McNair slip to them at No. 11, waited until the fourth round to get a quarterback (Kansas State's Chad May).

New Orleans Saints: Not too long ago the Saints had one of the NFL's best linebacking corps — Pat Swilling, Rickey Jackson, Sam Mills. Now, they're basically starting from scratch, and No. 1 pick Mark Fields is a good beginning. While linebacker may have been the weakest position in the draft, the Saints got an explosive athlete in Fields. Notre Dame's Ray Zellers gives the running game a boost. Wisconsin wide receiver Lee DeRamus could be a sixth-round steal if he's fully recovered from a broken leg which sidelined him all of last season.

New York Giants: The Giants certainly had bigger needs than running back, but Michigan's Tyrone Wheatley was just too good to pass up. He would have been a top-five pick had he come out as a junior. And since Rodney Hampton becomes a free agent after this season, picking up Wheatley makes sense. The Giants added depth and size to an aging offensive line with Montana's Scott Gragg (6-8, 315), nicknamed "Lurch," and Nebraska's Rob Zatechka (6-5, 307).

Seattle Seahawks: Rick Mirer's job description has changed dramatically. Next year, he'll be able to drop back and heave the ball downfield as far as he can and wait for Galloway to run under it. Galloway, the eighth pick overall, has what Colorado head coach Rick Neuheisel called "supernatural freak speed." He runs the 40-yard dash in 4.19 seconds and, if that wasn't enough, he can bench press 435 pounds. Mirer's arsenal will also include two other draftees, tight end Christian Fauria and receiver Eddie Goines.

Washington Redskins: See if you detect a

familiar pattern here. In his first draft, former Dallas offensive coordinator Norv Turner takes a potential franchise quarterback (Heath Shuler). In his second draft, he goes with a tall, game-breaking wide receiver (Colorado's Westbrook). It's still too early to compare Shuler to Troy Aikman, but Westbrook, who caught the dramatic "Hail Mary" pass against Michigan, is a dead ringer for Michael Irvin. Wisconsin's Cory Raymer (No. 37) was the top center chosen in the draft.

THE UGLY

These teams shouldn't have bothered.

Atlanta Falcons: There was little doubt which way the Falcons would go in the draft — only Denver gave up more yards than Atlanta a year ago. The Falcons, who moved down in the first round to get Eric Metcalf from Cleveland, immediately looked to the secondary, taking hard-hitting safety Devin Bush of Florida State with their first-round pick (26th overall) and Tennessee corner Ronald Davis in the second round. Davis, who was converted from WR to DB in '93, could turn into an excellent cover man.

Cleveland Browns: The Browns' brain trust was so flabbergasted when the Jets snagged Kyle Brady one pick before Cleveland's turn, it should have packed up



Michigan's Tyrone Wheatley could fill Rodney Hampton's Giant shoes one day very soon.

and headed back to the Dawg Pound right then and there. Apparently unable to think clearly, Cleveland passed up a chance to draft Wheatley, instead trading down for the 30th pick and what will likely be a similarly low first-rounder next year. The Browns wound up without a tight end and without a defensive tackle to replace Michael Dean Perry, but they landed quarterback Eric Zeier in the third round.

Dallas Cowboys: 'Boys will be 'Boys. Dallas never sits still on draft day, and this year was no different. The Cowboys traded their first pick to Tampa Bay, then grabbed Emmitt Smith's backup in the second round by taking Alabama RB Sherman Williams. Williams has good hands and could wind up as the Cowboys' third-down back. The question is, who needed more help — Smith or the offensive line? Michigan State guard Shane Hannah (No. 63) was the only lineman chosen. Illinois linebacker Dana Howard could be a fifth-round steal.

Denver Broncos: Rating Denver's draft is like asking a Broncos fan to pick his team's best Super Bowl moment: There's not much to go on in either instance. Denver's player personnel department took all of Saturday off before finally taking Jamie Brown in the fourth round.

Green Bay Packers: The Packers could have used a running back, then watched in horror as four of the five picks in front of them were used on RBs: Wheatley

(Giants); Napoleon Kaufman (Raiders); Stewart (Jacksonville); and Salaam (Bears). Green Bay then traded down in the first round to pick Arizona State corner Craig Newsome, who has sub-par speed.

Kansas City Chiefs: They needed offensive line help and reached a bit early for Trezelle Jenkins in the first round. They needed some run-stoppers and took Troy Dumas, a line-backer with coverage skills. They needed a receiver to replace J.J. Birden and gambled on former Florida State WR Tamarick Vanover, whose shape is a concern. Perhaps the only need the Chiefs responded to was in finding a quarterback for the future. Steve Stenstrom could be a nice fit here.

Los Angeles Raiders: The addition of Kaufman means the Raiders somehow got even faster on offense. Kaufman has receiver-type speed, which will fit right in with the rest of the Raiders, but he has kicker-type size (5-8, 182), which will likely keep him from being the 30-carry man they needed. Third-rounder Joe Aska (5-10, 223) probably isn't the answer either. Perhaps the most intriguing pick of the entire draft was the selection of BYU tackle Eli Herring, who said before the draft that he wouldn't play in the NFL because Sunday is the Mormon sabbath. The 330-pounder is probably worth keeping around just for the occasional Saturday and Monday games.

New England Patriots: Neither Wheatley nor Stewart fell far enough for Bill Par-

cells to land the feature back he and Drew Bledsoe so desperately wanted. So, Parcells played favorites again and opted for defense, the foundation of his Super Bowl-champion Giants teams. Defensive backs Ty Law and Jimmy Hitchcock will certainly help the pass defense, though the Patriots couldn't land that one dominant pass rusher.

New York Jets: Jets fans and the New York media were more interested in who the Jets didn't take than who they did. Rich Kotite didn't endear himself to his new neighbors by passing up Stokes and Sapp. No matter how good a pro tight end Brady becomes, Jets fans will rank his selection right up there with the time their team picked Ken O'Brien over Marino late in the first round of the 1983 Draft. They booed Brady undeservingly when he was drafted ninth overall and were stunned to silence when the Jets took NAIA product Hugh (as in "Who?") Douglas seven picks later.

San Diego Chargers: Not even the blackjack tables in Vegas offer anyone who loves to deal more than San Diego GM Bobby Beathard. He wound up with a dozen draft picks — more than any team in the league. How well those picks are utilized is another story entirely. Cornerback Terrance Shaw should help a secondary that was shredded by Steve Young in the Super Bowl, and running back Terrell Fletcher will someday fill Ronnie Harmon's role.

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AFC EAST

PREDICTED ORDER OF FINISH

POWER RATING

1. NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS	80
2. MIAMI DOLPHINS	79
3. INDIANAPOLIS COLTS	71
4. BUFFALO BILLS	70
5. NEW YORK JETS	65



Drew Bledsoe,
New England

JOE'S PLAYOFF PICKS

PATRIOTS: Drew Bledsoe is the most talented quarterback in the NFL. His added year of maturity, plus the presence of Ben Coates and Dave Meggett, could make this the most balanced offense in the NFL. With Chris Slade and Willie McGinest a year older and wiser, they can wreak havoc on opposing offenses.

DOLPHINS: Dan Marino is hungry, and the Dolphins made some big moves to fill his plate. With Eric Green at tight end and new receivers like Randal Hill and Gary Clark, watch out. But the one piece of garnishing that would make the Dolphins even tougher to beat would be the addition of Deion Sanders.

FINAL '94 STANDINGS	OVERALL	DIV.	PF	PA
MIAMI DOLPHINS	10-6	5-3	389	327
NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS	10-6	4-4	351	312
INDIANAPOLIS COLTS	8-8	4-4	307	320
BUFFALO BILLS	7-9	3-5	340	356
NEW YORK JETS	6-10	4-4	264	320

PLAYOFF RESULTS

Wild Card Round

Miami 27, Kansas City 17

Cleveland 20, New England 13

AFC Divisional Semifinals

San Diego 22, Miami 21

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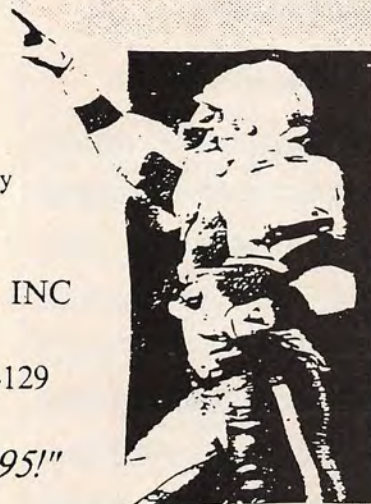


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NEW ENGLAND Patriots

'94 RECORD

10-7 (4-4 in Division, 0-1 in playoffs)

COACH

Bill Parcells, 3rd season with Patriots,
15-17; 100-69-1 overall

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1994 (Lost to Cleveland, 20-13, in AFC Wild Card game)

HOME STADIUM

Foxboro Stadium, Foxboro, Mass.
(60,794, grass)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Michael Timpson, WR (Chi.); Kevin Turner, RB (Phi.); Tim Goad, NT (Cle.); Harlon Barnett, S (Minn.); Ray Agnew, DE (NYG)

Free-agent signings: Dave Meggett, RB (NYG); Bobby Abrams, LB (Minn.); Jeff Dellenbach, C (Mia.); Tim Roberts, DT (Hou.)

Others: Rod Smith, DB (selected by Car. in exp. draft); Steve Hawkins, WR (selected by Car. in exp. draft); Eugene Chung, G (selected by Car. in exp. draft)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Maurice Carthon (off. asst.); Romeo Crennel (DL); Al Groh (def. coord./LBs); Fred Hoaglin (OL); Chris Palmer (WRs); Johnny Parker (strength and cond.); Ray Perkins (off. coord.); Mike Pope (TEs); Dante Scarnecchia (def. asst.); Mike Sweatman (special teams); Bob Trott (DBs); Charlie Wells (RBs)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	CLEVELAND, 1
Sept. 10	MIAMI, 1
Sept. 17	at San Francisco, 4
Sept. 24	Open Date
Oct. 1	at Atlanta, 1
Oct. 8	DENVER, 8
Oct. 15	at Kansas City, 1
Oct. 23	BUFFALO, 9
Oct. 29	CAROLINA, 1
Nov. 5	at N.Y. Jets, 1
Nov. 12	at Miami, 1
Nov. 19	INDIANAPOLIS, 1
Nov. 26	at Buffalo, 1
Dec. 3	NEW ORLEANS, 1
Dec. 10	N.Y. JETS, 1
Dec. 16	at Pittsburgh, 12:30
Dec. 23	at Indianapolis, 8
All times Eastern	

By RON BORGES

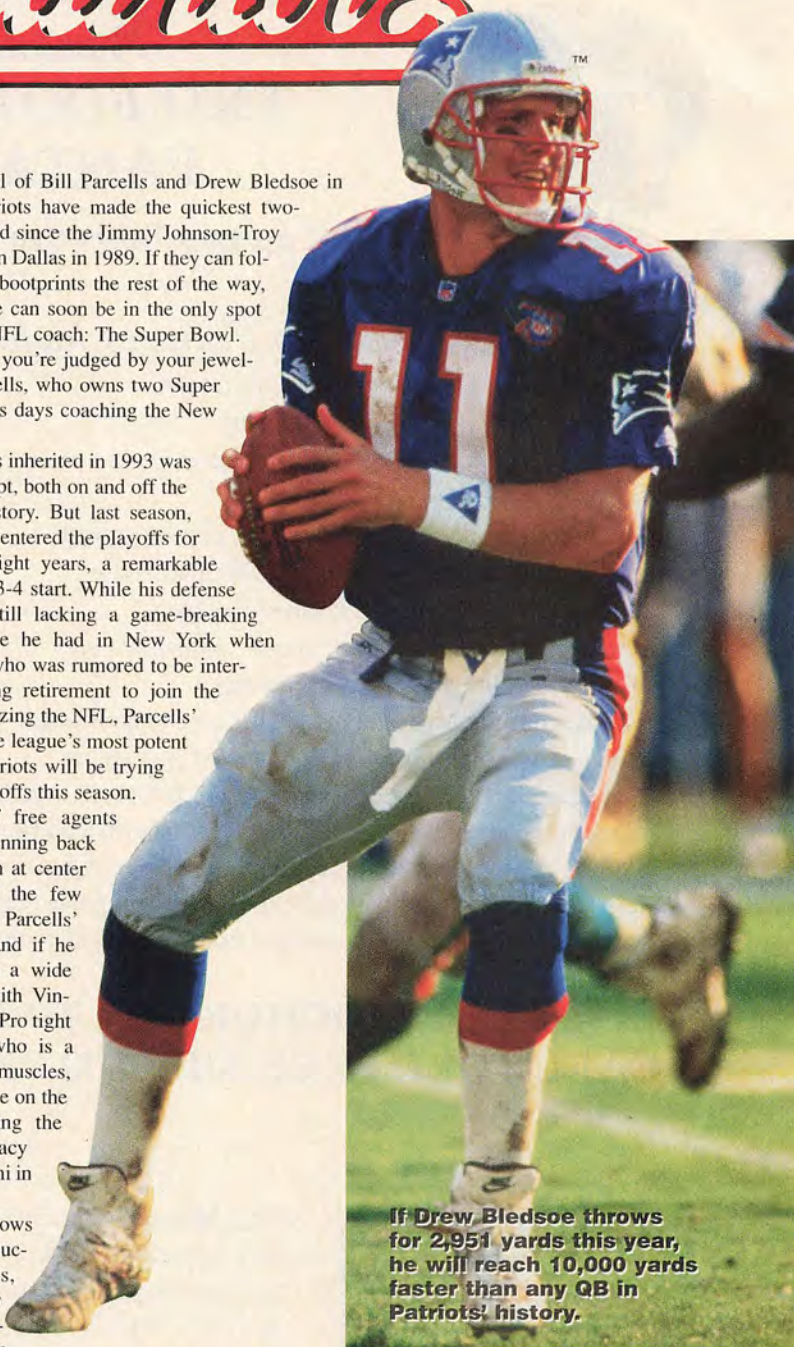
Since the arrival of Bill Parcells and Drew Bledsoe in 1993, the Patriots have made the quickest two-year turnaround since the Jimmy Johnson-Troy Aikman era began in Dallas in 1989. If they can follow the Cowboys' bootprints the rest of the way, Parcells believes he can soon be in the only spot that counts for an NFL coach: The Super Bowl.

"In my business, you're judged by your jewelry," conceded Parcells, who owns two Super Bowl rings from his days coaching the New York Giants.

The team Parcells inherited in 1993 was one of the most inept, both on and off the field, in league history. But last season, they were 10-6 and entered the playoffs for the first time in eight years, a remarkable turnaround after a 3-4 start. While his defense remains suspect, still lacking a game-breaking player like the one he had in New York when Lawrence Taylor (who was rumored to be interested in abandoning retirement to join the Patriots) was terrorizing the NFL, Parcells' offense is one of the league's most potent and is what the Patriots will be trying to ride into the playoffs this season.

The addition of free agents Dave Meggett at running back and Jeff Dellenbach at center shored up two of the few weaknesses left in Parcells' offensive arsenal, and if he can come up with a wide receiver to team with Vincent Brisby and All-Pro tight end Ben Coates, who is a wide receiver with muscles, New England will be on the verge of challenging the long-time supremacy of Buffalo and Miami in the AFC East.

Yet, Parcells knows no matter how productive his offense is, people regularly involved in shoot-outs usually end up riddled with holes. To avoid that, he tried to shore up his defense by acquiring three free agent defensive linemen who give the Patriots more size than in the past and by drafting two cornerbacks and an inside linebacker in the first three rounds of the '95 Draft.



If Drew Bledsoe throws for 2,951 yards this year, he will reach 10,000 yards faster than any QB in Patriots' history.

MILESTONES

- Matt Bahr needs just 74 points to become only the seventh player in NFL history to score 1,400 points in his career.
- For the first time in the 35-year history of the franchise, Patriots fans will be able to watch every game on local television. In 1991, New England was last in the NFL in season ticket sales with 17,634. This year, more than 59,000 were sold.

POWER RATING

80

QUARTERBACKS

A year ago, Bledsoe (then 22) became the youngest quarterback in history to go to the Pro Bowl. He earned it by leading the NFL with 691 attempts, 400 completions and 4,555 passing yards. He is already the youngest passer to throw for 7,000 yards and, a year ago, threw 70 passes in an overtime victory over Minnesota. Those numbers should only inflate this year. Behind him are strong-armed Scott Zolak and Jay Walker. Neither will get a chance to prove themselves as long as Bledsoe is breathing.

RATING: 10

RUNNING BACKS

This is a strange situation. New England signed Meggett to a multi-million dollar free agent contract because he is the most explosive third-down back in football. The Patriots believe his presence will be worth several wins on its own. They also announced a change in philosophy toward a more spread offense using smaller, quicker backs than the mule teams Parcells has preferred in the past. Still, they remain a team without a first- and second-down back. Even if Leroy Thompson, who was unsigned after the draft, returns, he is also a third-down back.

Young Corey Croom, who didn't have a carry until the playoffs, is the best young hope unless third-round choice Curtis Martin (Pitt) can step up. Starting fullback Kevin Turner (52 receptions) was also lost to free agency and will be replaced by the steady-but-less-spectacular Sam Gash and 243-pound Bernie Legette.

RATING: 8

RECEIVERS

If Bledsoe is throwing the football, it seems most anyone can catch it. Still, nearly half of his 400 receptions disappeared in the offseason when Turner and Michael Timpson (74) signed elsewhere and Thompson (65) was also in danger of leaving. Still, young Vincent Brisby (58 catches, 15.6-yard average) may be on the verge of stardom, and Coates (NFL-record 96 catches for a tight end) is already there. Nearly half of Coates' catches went for first downs. If Kevin Lee, who was lost for the '94 season with a broken jaw, can rebound or CFL acquisition Will Moore can shine, Bledsoe will have more targets than William Tell.

RATING: 8

OFFENSIVE LINE

Anchored by three-time Pro Bowl selection Bruce Armstrong at left tackle, the line is big and getting bigger. The signing of ex-Miami Dolphins center Dellenbach had the double-barreled effect of shoring up what has been a massive hole for years in New England while also weakening its chief AFC East rival. Guards Doug Skene, Bob Kratch and Todd Rucci give push, depth and size in the middle, and right tackle Pat Harlow gave up only four sacks last season and has not missed a start in 63 games since entering the league.

RATING: 9

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
50	Bobby Abrams	LB	6-3/230	6	Michigan
76	Bruce Armstrong	T	6-4/284	9	Louisville
65	Mike Arthur	C	6-3/280	5	Texas A&M
3	Marc Bahr	K	5-10/175	17	Penn State
98	Troy Barnett	DE	6-4/280	2	North Carolina
11	Drew Bledsoe	QB	6-5/233	3	Washington State
51	Andre Bowden	LB	6-3/240	1	Fayetteville State
82	Vincent Brisby	WR	6-2/188	3	NE Louisiana
30	Corwin Brown	FS	6-1/200	3	Michigan
86	Troy Brown	WR	5-9/190	3	Marshall
59	Vincent Brown	LB	6-2/245	8	Miss. Valley State
85	John Burke	TE	6-3/255	2	Virginia Tech
44	Marion Butts	RB	6-1/248	7	Florida State
87	Ben Coates	TE	6-5/245	5	Livingstone
54	Todd Collins	LB	6-2/242	74	Carson-Newman
81	Ray Crittenden	WR	6-1/188	3	Virginia Tech
26	Corey Croom	RB	5-11/208	3	Ball State
64	Jeff Dellenbach	C	6-6/300	11	Wisconsin
99	Steve DeOssie	LB	6-2/248	12	Boston College
84	Elbert Ellis	WR	6-5/216	2	Pittsburgh
88	Paul Francisco	TE	6-6/236	1	Boston University
33	Sam Gash	FB	5-11/224	4	Penn State
67	Mike Gisler	G/C	6-4/300	3	Houston
76	James Gregory	DE	6-3/310	1	Alabama
29	Myron Guyton	FS	6-1/205	7	Eastern Kentucky
92	Jon Hand	DE	6-7/310	10	Alabama
77	Pat Harlow	T	6-6/290	5	USC
12	Mario Henry	WR	6-1/187	1	Rutgers
37	Maurice Hurst	CB	5-10/185	6	Southern
97	Aaron Jones	DE	6-5/267	8	Eastern Kentucky
96	Mike Jones	DE	6-4/295	5	N.C. State
61	Bob Kranch	G	6-3/288	7	Iowa
68	Max Lane	T	6-6/295	2	Navy
19	Kevin Lee	WR	6-1/194	2	Alabama
35	Bernie Legette	FB	6-1/243	3	Michigan
43	Vernon Lewis	CB	5-10/192	3	Pittsburgh
55	Willie McGinest	LB	6-5/252	2	USC
22	Dave Meggett	RB	5-7/195	7	Towson State
70	Brandon Moore	T	6-7/295	3	Duke
58	Marty Moore	LB	6-1/244	2	Kentucky
18	Wil Moore	WR	6-2/180	1	Texas Southern
5	Pat O'Neill	P/PK	6-1/200	2	Syracuse
93	Mike Pitts	DE	6-5/277	13	Alabama
75	Leonard Ray, Jr.	DE	6-3/297	1	Louisville
23	Terry Ray	SS	6-1/205	4	Oklahoma
21	Ricky Reynolds	CB	5-11/190	9	Washington State
94	Tim Roberts	DE	6-6/318	4	So. Mississippi
71	Todd Rucci	G	6-5/291	3	Penn State
95	Dwayne Sabb	LB	6-4/248	4	New Hampshire
74	Doug Skene	G	6-6/295	3	Michigan
53	Chris Slade	LB	6-4/232	3	Virginia
63	Sylvester Stanley	NT	6-2/286	2	Michigan
36	Leroy Thompson	RB	5-11/216	5	Penn State
62	Rich Tylski	C	6-4/289	1	Utah State
91	Bruce Walker	NT	6-4/325	2	UCLA
7	Jay Walker	QB	6-3/232	2	Howard
25	Larry Whigham	FS	6-2/202	2	NE Louisiana
90	Reggie White	NT	6-4/300	4	North Carolina A&T
27	Darryl Wren	CB	6-1/188	5	Pittsburg State
16	Scott Zolak	QB	6-5/222	5	Maryland

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1	Ty Law	CB	5-11/196	Michigan
2	Ted Johnson	LB	6-3/240	Colorado
3a	Curtis Martin	RB	5-11/203	Pittsburgh
3b	Jimmy Hitchcock	CB	5-10/188	North Carolina
4	Dave Wohlabaugh	C/G	6-3/304	Syracuse
6	Dino Philyaw	RB	5-10/199	Oregon
7	Carlos Yancy	CB	6-1/185	Georgia



Ben Coates' 96 receptions last year were an NFL record for tight ends.

DEFENSIVE LINE

There is no gamebreaker here. Nose tackle Tim Goad is gone to Cleveland and must be replaced. The plan is to try 286-pound Sylvester Stanley, 300-pound Reggie White, a little-used former free agent from San Diego, and maybe even another young free agent, defensive end Tim Roberts. Roberts signed a one-year deal for \$1 million, which seemed like an odd decision considering his unproductive past. But who will rush the passer? Free agent Jon Hand, who once had 11 sacks in a season while in Indianapolis, is the leading candidate.

RATING: 6

LINEBACKERS

Chris Slade led the team in sacks with nine and Willie McGinest, who a year ago was the fourth player selected in the draft and took over as a starter at midseason, went from looking lost as a rookie to finishing strongly. Behind them is young Dwayne Sabb, a third-year player who started until McGinest replaced him. One inside position is manned by Vincent Brown, who has averaged more than 100 tackles a year since being

moved inside. The other inside spot is a problem, with incumbent Todd Collins having sustained another knee injury that limited him to seven starts. He will be challenged by rookie Ted Johnson and part-time starter Marty Moore.

RATING: 8

SECONDARY

Why do Maurice Hurst, Ricky Reynolds and Myron Guyton earn \$5.1 million between them? Good question. Hurst is as good a cover man as there is in the AFC and has improved as a tackler. Reynolds got off to a shaky start but came on later in the year and mans the other corner. Guyton didn't make many plays at safety, and that is one concern. The other is replacing departed Harlon Barnett, a steady strong safety who went to Minnesota. The candidates are Terry Ray, Larry Whigham and two rookies — Ty Law and James Hitchcock. That duo will also be counted on to contribute at nickelback, replacing Rod Smith, who was lost in the expansion draft.

RATING: 7

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	...at Miami	...Lost, 39-35
Sept. 11	...BUFFALO	...Lost, 38-35
Sept. 18	...at Cincinnati	...Won, 31-28
Sept. 25	...at Detroit	...Won, 23-17
Oct. 2	...GREEN BAY	...Won, 17-16
Oct. 9	...L.A. RAIDERS	...Lost, 21-17
Oct. 16	...at N.Y. Jets	...Lost, 24-17
Oct. 30	...MIAMI	...Lost, 23-3
Nov. 6	...at Cleveland	...Lost, 13-6
Nov. 13	...MINNESOTA	...Won, 26-20
Nov. 20	...SAN DIEGO	...Won, 23-17
Nov. 27	...at Indianapolis	...Won, 12-10
Dec. 4	...N.Y. JETS	...Won, 24-13
Dec. 11	...INDIANAPOLIS	...Won, 28-18
Dec. 18	...at Buffalo	...Won, 41-17
Dec. 24	...at Chicago	...Won, 13-3
Jan. 1	...at Cleveland	...Lost, 20-13*

*- AFC Wild Card game

SPECIAL TEAMS

Things should be improved markedly here as long as 39-year-old kicker Matt Bahr hasn't lost his leg. He didn't last season, making 23 of 26 kicks from inside the 40 and four of eight between 40 and 50 yards. He can't kickoff anymore but that doesn't matter because young punter Pat O'Neill, who netted 35.7 yards per punt as a rookie, can boom it into the end zone. The addition of Meggett gives New England an explosive returner.

RATING: 9

DRAFT

The Patriots decided they needed backs, defensive ones and offensive ones, and got two of each. First-rounder Law, a junior out of Michigan, seemed a gamble because of questionable speed (4.63 in the 40), and the third-round choice, Hitchcock, is a gamble because looseness in his knee scared off many teams. If healthy, he's a steal. The key, though, will be the performances of running backs Martin and Dino Philyaw, a fifth-round choice. A starting job is open in the backfield and Parcells thinks Martin, who gained 1,100 yards as a junior before being limited to just two games by ankle and foot injuries last season, can win it.

RATING: 6

COACHING

Parcells was everyone's choice as coach of the year last season after taking the 5-11 Patriots of two years ago into the playoffs with a seven-game win streak at the end of the season that reversed a dismal start. Not even a first-round playoff loss could dim the euphoria. But, as sound as his coaching is, Parcells has yet to hit it big with a free agent acquisition. He spent millions on Reynolds and had to bench him halfway through last season. This is a critical year for Parcells to prove not that he can coach, but that he can get the players needed to compete at the league's top level.

RATING: 9

Ron Borges cover the Patriots for the Boston Globe.

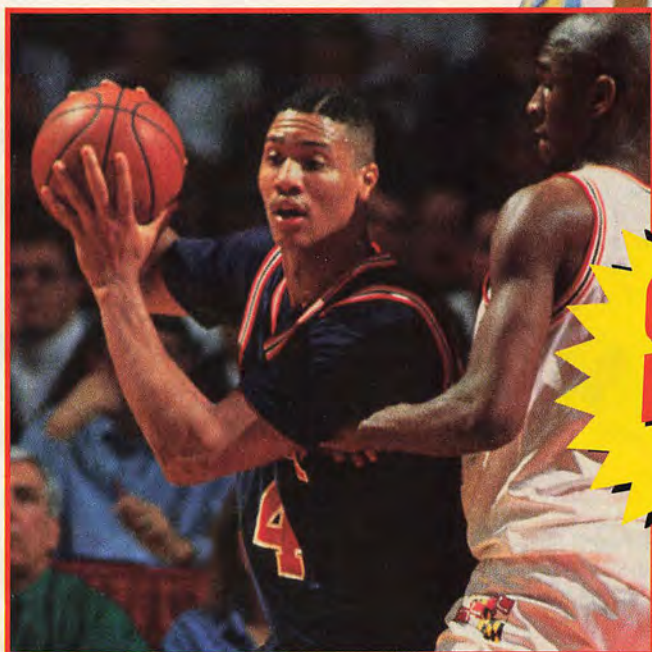
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MIAMI Dolphins

'94 RECORD

11-7 (5-3 in Division, 1-1 in playoffs)

COACH

Don Shula, 26th season with Dolphins, 264-138-2; 337-164-6 overall

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1994 (lost to San Diego, 22-21, in Divisional Semifinals)

HOME STADIUM

Joe Robbie Stadium, Miami, Fla. (73,000, grass)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Rodney Craver, RB (Den.); Jeff Dellenbach, T (N.E.)

Free-agent signings: Eric Green, TE (Pitt.); Randall Hill, WR (Ariz.); Dan McGwire, QB (Sea.); Gary Clark, WR (Ariz.)

Others: Keith Jackson, TE (traded to G.B.); Terrell Buckley, CB (acquired in trade from G.B.); Doug Pederson, QB (selected by Car. in exp. draft); Brent Boyer, LB (selected by Jack. in exp. draft); Jeff Novak, T (selected by Jack. in exp. draft)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Monte Clark (OL); Joe Greene (DL); George Hill (LBs); Rich McGeorge (asst. offensive line, TEs); Tony Nathan (RBs); Tom Olivadotti (def. coordinator); Mel Phillips (DBs); Larry Seiple (receivers); Gary Stevens (off. coordinator); Mike Westhof (special teams)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3 N.Y. JETS, 4
 Sept. 10 at New England, 1
 Sept. 18 PITTSBURGH, 9
 Sept. 24 Open Date
 Oct. 1 at Cincinnati, 1
 Oct. 8 INDIANAPOLIS, 4
 Oct. 15 at New Orleans, 4
 Oct. 22 at N.Y. Jets, 1
 Oct. 29 BUFFALO, 4
 Nov. 5 at San Diego, 8
 Nov. 12 NEW ENGLAND, 1
 Nov. 20 SAN FRANCISCO, 9
 Nov. 26 at Indianapolis, 1
 Dec. 3 ATLANTA, 1
 Dec. 11 KANSAS CITY, 9
 Dec. 17 at Buffalo, 1
 Dec. 24 at St. Louis, 4
 All times Eastern

By JASON COLE

As the constant rumors about Jimmy Johnson swirled with every loss last season, Dolphins coach Don Shula squirmed like he never had before in his 25 years in Miami. It has been 22 seasons since the Dolphins won a title, and the locals were getting a tad antsy. Shula took more heat than ever, but it seems to have only piqued his resolve to win another championship and show everyone that being the winningest coach of all-time isn't merely a by-product of longevity.

That explains why the Dolphins worked so hard in the off-season to upgrade. After losing to San Diego, 22-21, in the playoffs and watching the Chargers get to the Super Bowl, the Dolphins knew they were close to Super Bowl caliber.

So, while other playoff teams, such as San Francisco, Dallas, and Pittsburgh, did their best to cut losses, the Dolphins took strides to get better. They improved at tight end by convincing Pro Bowler Eric Green to leave Pittsburgh. They got cornerback Terrell Buckley from Green Bay and defensive end Trace Armstrong, a pass-rush specialist, from Chicago in trades to shore up their porous nickel defense. They re-signed starting defensive end Jeff Cross, linebacker Chris Singleton and nose tackle Chuck Klingbeil, getting 21 of their 22 projected starters in the fold before the draft.

They did all of that while playing precariously close to the salary cap — much closer than in 1994, when they tried to be more conservative. Clearly, the combination of owner H. Wayne Huizenga's deep pockets and Shula's heightened sense of urgency have made it obvious that the Dolphins know that this year is their best opportunity.

If the Dolphins don't win this year, they may be seeing the downside very quickly. First, quarterback Dan Marino will be 34 this season. While still great, there is a limit to what anyone can do after a certain age. Second, the Dolphins will have a number of important free agents to re-sign after this season, with Pro Bowl linebacker Bryan Cox, Pro Bowl guard Keith Sims, cornerback Troy Vincent, defensive end Marco Coleman, right tackle Ron Heller, running back Terry Kirby and Armstrong all nearing the end of their contracts.

In other words, it could get hotter for Shula if the Dolphins don't make the most of this chance.

QUARTERBACKS

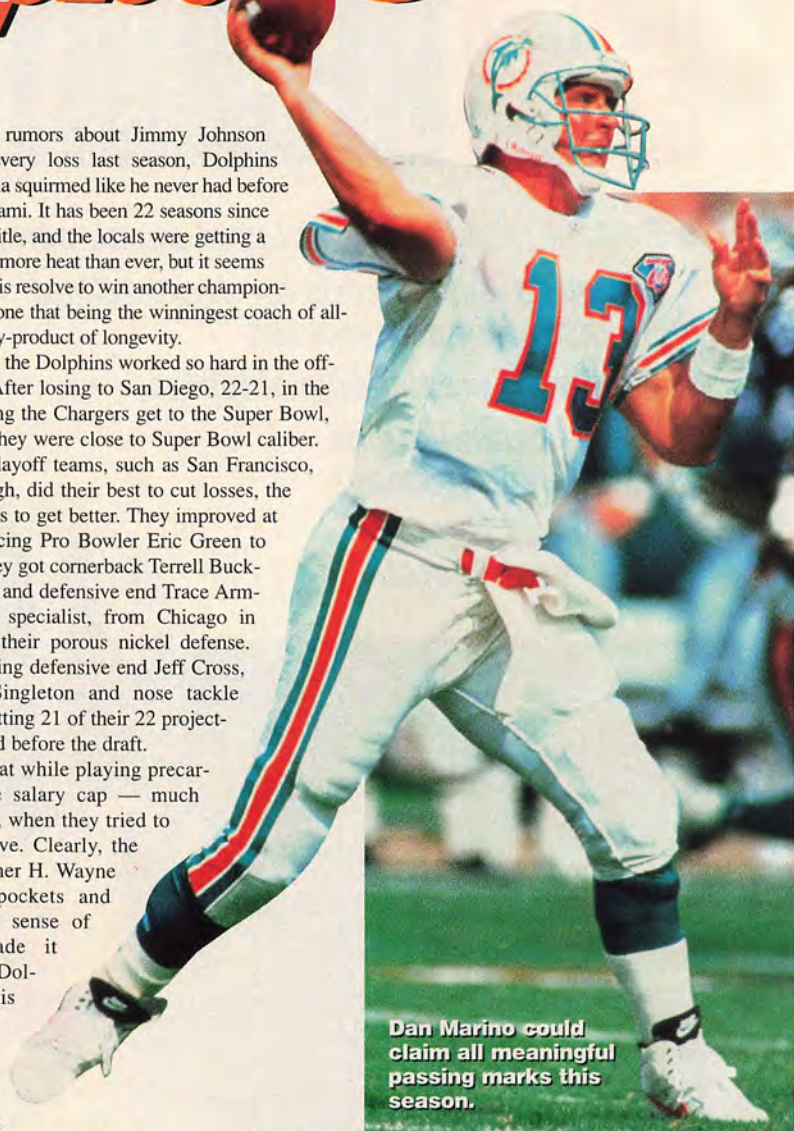
Marino and Bernie Kosar may be the best pairing in the league. Marino is the best pure passer the

MILESTONES

Quarterback Dan Marino should break Fran Tarkenton's NFL records for touchdown passes, yards passing, completions and attempts this season. Tarkenton, who played 18 seasons with Minnesota and the New York Giants, had 342 touchdown passes, 47,003 yards, 3,686 completions and 6,467 attempts. Marino enters the season with 328 touchdown passes, 45,173 yards, 3,604 completions and 6,049 attempts in only 12 seasons.

POWER RATING

79



Dan Marino could claim all meaningful passing marks this season.

game has ever seen. Even though he complained about being uncomfortable throughout the 1994 season as he recovered from a ruptured right Achilles' tendon, he had his best season since 1986. His 30 touchdown passes and 4,453 yards were his most since '86, and his 62.6 completion percentage was the second best of his career. He also had a four-game stretch at the end of the season, when he completed nearly 70 percent of his passes despite losing his top two running backs (Kirby and Keith Byars), both talented receivers. Kosar has made his impact in more subtle ways, helping with play-calling and the overall design of the attack. He may be the first player that Marino has listened to since former backup Don Strock left in 1987. Marino's movements are laboring more than ever, but he still has a great sense of avoiding the rush in the pocket.

RATING: 10

RUNNING BACKS

The Dolphins were the only team to lose both starting running backs to injuries during the season and still make the playoffs. Throw in the fact that the leading rusher from 1993, Mark Higgs, was cut during the season, and that's quite a feat. It's a testimony to two things: The Dolphins coaching staff did an outstanding job and the Dolphins had great depth for the first time in many years. Bernie Parmalee, a former UPS worker in Muncie, Ind., came on to rush for 868 yards and six touchdowns in 10 starts. Kirby and Byars returned from knee injuries and are among the best receiving backs in the league. Throw in second-year back Irving Spikes, who averaged 4.5 yards a carry as a rookie, and the Dolphins may have their most diverse backfield since the Csonka-Klick-Morris days of the early '70s.

RATING: 7

RECEIVERS

On this team, everybody catches the ball. Green takes over for Keith Jackson at tight end. While Green is a better all-around player, especially as a blocker, Jackson was especially good at reading coverages the same way Marino did in the Dolphins' option-route pass attack. Green averaged more yards per catch than Jackson last season, but it remains to be seen how he handles the adjustments. Starting wide receiver Irving Fryar is an amazing physical specimen at age 32. He may be better now than ever, posting career bests of 73 catches and 1,270 yards last season. Draftee Pete Mitchell is yet another solid target.

Mark Ingram is gone, but O.J. McDuffie takes over as the starter. The Dolphins believe McDuffie could be another Mark Clayton, particularly on the tough underneath patterns. Ingram's spot on the roster will be taken by free-agent acquisition Randal Hill, who may not be as accomplished but is faster than Ingram. Hill also played his college ball at the University of Miami.

RATING: 10

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
71	Ethan Albright	T	6-5/292	1	North Carolina
92	Trace Armstrong	DE	6-4/260	7	Florida
28	Gene Atkins	S	5-11/201	9	Florida A&M
53	Aubrey Beavers	LB	6-3/231	2	Oklahoma
95	Tim Bowens	DT	6-4/310	2	Mississippi
77	Kevin Brothen	G/C	6-1/293	2	Vanderbilt
37	J.B. Brown	CB	6-0/191	7	Maryland
27	Terrell Buckley	CB	5-9/176	4	Florida State
54	Chuck Bullough	LB	6-1/238	3	Michigan State
41	Keith Byars	FB	6-1/255	10	Ohio State
98	Mark Caesar	NT	6-2/295	1	Miami (Fla.)
90	Marco Coleman	DE	6-3/267	4	Georgia Tech
51	Bryan Cox	LB	6-4/248	5	W. Illinois
91	Jeff Cross	DE	6-4/280	8	Missouri
59	Dwayne Dotson	LB	6-1/256	1	Mississippi
4	Craig Fayak	K	6-1/188	1	Penn State
57	Dion Foxx	LB	6-3/250	2	James Madison
80	Irving Fryar	WR	6-0/200	12	Nebraska
93	William Gaines	DT	6-5/294	2	Florida
62	Chris Gray	G	6-4/292	3	Auburn
42	Chris Green	S	5-11/188	5	Illinois
86	Eric Green	TE	6-5/280	6	Liberty
73	Ron Heller	T	6-6/290	12	Penn State
89	Randal Hill	WR	5-10/180	5	Miami (Fla.)
31	Sean Hill	CB	5-10/179	2	Montana St.
50	Dwight Hollier	LB	6-2/250	4	North Carolina
38	Calvin Jackson	CB	5-9/185	1	Auburn
97	Tyoka Jackson	DE	6-2/266	1	Penn State
15	Demeris Johnson	WR	6-0/182	1	W. Illinois
25	Pat Johnson	S	6-1/204	1	Purdue
17	John Kidd	P	6-3/214	12	Northwestern
43	Terry Kirby	RB	6-1/218	3	Virginia
99	Chuck Klingbeil	NT	6-1/288	5	No. Michigan
19	Bernie Kosar	QB	6-5/214	11	Miami (Fla.)
13	Dan Marino	QB	6-4/224	13	Pittsburgh
11	Dan McGwire	QB	6-8/240	5	San Diego State
81	O.J. McDuffie	WR	5-10/188	3	Penn State
83	Scott Miller	WR	5-11/185	5	UCLA
66	Gary Needham	G	6-3/352	1	E. Washington
26	Nelson Chico	S	6-0/198	1	Tennessee
30	Bernie Parmalee	RB	5-11/196	4	Ball State
2	Robert Rashad-Amir	WR	6-3/188	1	Florida State
61	Tim Ruddy	C	6-3/290	2	Notre Dame
33	Dexster Seigler	CB	5-9/179	1	Miami (Fla.)
69	Keith Sims	G	6-3/309	6	Iowa State
55	Chris Singleton	LB	6-2/246	6	Arizona
29	Frankie Smith	CB	5-9/182	3	Baylor
34	Kwane Smith	CB	5-9/172	1	West Virginia
40	Irving Spikes	RB	5-8/206	2	NE Louisiana
35	Michael Stewart	S	5-11/202	9	Fresno State
10	Pete Stoyanovich	K	5-11/195	7	Indiana
23	Troy Vincent	CB	6-0/184	4	Wisconsin
78	Richmond Webb	T	6-6/303	6	Texas A&M
79	Larry Webster	DE/DT	6-5/285	4	Maryland
60	Bert Weidner	G	6-2/295	6	Kent State
85	Ronnie Williams	TE	6-3/258	3	Oklahoma State
49	Robert Wilson	FB	6-0/255	3	Texas A&M

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

DR.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1	Billy Milner	T	6-5/293	Houston
2	Andrew Greene	G	6-3/304	Indiana
4	Pete Mitchell	TE	6-2/243	Boston College
5	Norman Hand	DT	6-3/329	Mississippi
6	Jeff Kopp	LB	6-3/243	USC
7a	Corey Swinson	DT	6-5/334	Hampton Institute
7b	Shannon Myers	WR	6-0/171	Lenior-Rhyne



Irving Fryar had a career-best 73 catches last year.

OFFENSIVE LINE

The Dolphins allowed the fewest sacks per attempt (one every 38) in the league last season and the running game finished No. 13, its highest ranking since 1983. That should say something about the offensive line. The short-yardage running game (which suffered against Indianapolis and San Diego late last season) must get better, and the group loses at least one starter — center Jeff Dellenbach went to New England as a free agent and right guard Bert Weidner had offseason ankle surgery and isn't expected back until August at the earliest.

Tim Ruddy, a second-round pick in 1994, takes over at center and Chris Gray, a fifth-rounder in 1993, takes over at right guard. That's the big project for offensive line coach Monte Clark, who takes over for longtime assistant John Sandusky. The rest of the group is sound with left tackle Richmond Webb and left guard Keith Sims, both Pro Bowlers, and right tackle Ron Heller, who was the only one in the group not to get called for holding last season. Green, who is almost another tackle at 280 pounds, will help the short game.

RATING 8

DEFENSIVE LINE

The Dolphins finished with only 29 sacks last season. The run defense was better though, finishing sixth in the league and setting a franchise record by allowing only 89.4 yards per game. This is a slightly better-than-average group overall, so the addition of Armstrong (19

sacks the past two seasons) is a boost.

Left defensive end Cross (9.5 sacks in 13 games) can slide inside on passing downs to make room for Armstrong. Right defensive end Coleman (six sacks) needs to take another step with his pass rush, but is a fine run defender. Nose tackle Klingbeil is a run defender only. The big improvement could come from defensive tackle Tim Bowens, who went from a first-round "reach" to AFC Defensive Rookie of the Year. He is an excellent run defender and is just learning to use his immense quickness as a pass rusher.

RATING: 7.5

LINEBACKERS

After the retirement of John Offerdahl and injuries to two other players, Bryan Cox moved to middle linebacker and returned to the Pro Bowl. Cox proved to be a tough pass defender because of his long arms and 6-foot-5 frame. He also set a personal high with 147 tackles. The Dolphins think so much of Cox that they plan to use him all over the field in blitz situations against both the pass and run. As for the rest of the group, it's better than in years past with Singleton, Aubrey Beavers and Dwight Hollier, who can play both outside and middle. Singleton and Hollier both missed significant time last season with injuries. This group needs to take advantage of its overall ability and do a little more.

RATING: 7.5

SECONDARY

This group suffered early in the season with the addition of two new safeties (Gene Atkins and Michael Stewart) and constant change at left cornerback because of injuries. After Troy Vincent, who is on the verge of being a Pro Bowler, returned to the left cornerback spot, everything seemed to settle down. Vincent led the team with five interceptions and 20 passes defended despite missing three games. Right cornerback J.B. Brown is dependable, as is Atkins. The addition of Buckley (five interceptions) improves the coverage in the nickel defense and adds quickness overall.

RATING: 7

SPECIAL TEAMS

Kicker Pete Stoyanovich's missed 48-yard field goal at the end of the playoff loss to San Diego was the first truly crucial kick that he has ever missed. He still is a clutch kicker, but how that miss will affect his psyche is a lingering question (see Scott Norwood). Journeyman punter John Kidd returns after a decent finish last season. He took over when Jim Arnold was cut last season and is the third punter the team has had since letting Reggie Roby go before the 1993 season.

As for the return teams, the Dolphins had the ignominious honor of being the first team in NFL history to allow a punt or kick return for a touchdown in three consecutive games. That was because injuries forced good special teams players such as Parmalee to play full-time elsewhere. Some of it was because the Dolphins don't have a lot of speed. Punt and kick return-

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	...NEW ENGLAND	...Won, 39-35
Sept. 11	...at Green Bay	...Won, 24-14
Sept. 18	...N.Y. JETS	...Won, 28-14
Sept. 25	...at Minnesota	...Lost, 38-35
Oct. 2	...at Cincinnati	...Won, 23-7
Oct. 9	...at Buffalo	...Lost, 21-11
Oct. 16	...L.A. RAIDERS	...Won, 20-17 (OT)
Oct. 30	...at New England	...Won, 23-3
Nov. 6	...INDIANAPOLIS	...Won, 22-21
Nov. 13	...CHICAGO	...Lost, 17-14
Nov. 20	...at Pittsburgh	...Lost, 16-13 (OT)
Nov. 27	...at N.Y. Jets	...Won, 28-24
Dec. 4	...BUFFALO	...Lost, 42-31
Dec. 12	...KANSAS CITY	...Won, 45-28
Dec. 18	...at Indianapolis	...Lost, 10-6
Dec. 25	...DETROIT	...Won, 27-20
Dec. 31	...KANSAS CITY	...Won, 27-17*
Jan. 8	...at San Diego	...Lost, 22-21†

*AFC Wild Card game
†AFC semifinals

er McDuffie had a down year and will be challenged by Buckley and Hill.

RATING: 7

DRAFT

The Dolphins looked ahead with their first two picks, selecting offensive tackle Billy Milner of Houston and guard Andrew Greene of Indiana. Neither is expected to start this year, although both are being groomed for 1996. Milner will be the first backup to tackles Webb and Heller and will take over for Heller, whose contract runs out this season. Greene is around as insurance in case Sims is lost to free agency after this season. The rest of the picks were either for need (tight end Mitchell is a long snapper) or experiment (defensive tackle Norman Hand is a project inside). The Dolphins may have to wait awhile to see if this group is any good.

RATING: 6

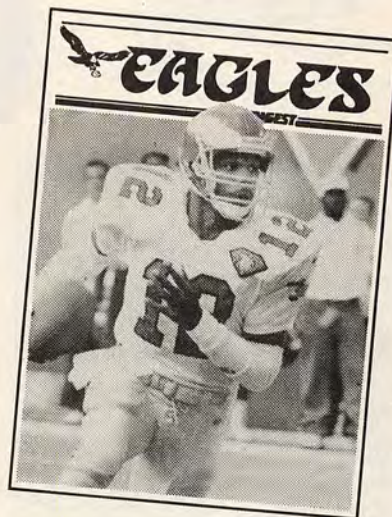
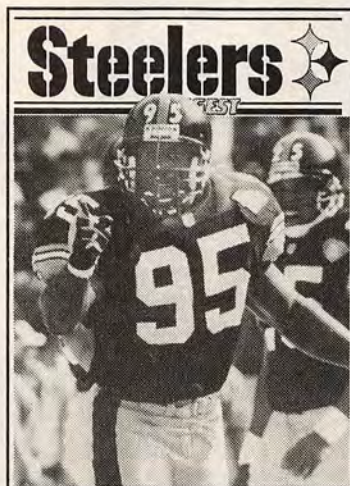
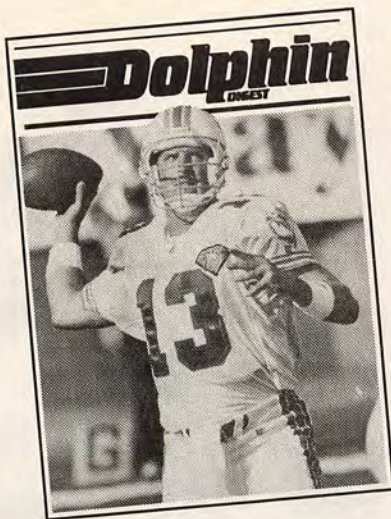
COACHING

Don Shula has accomplished so much and knows the game so well that it's often hard to question him. He and his staff did an excellent job to get so close last year despite losing their starting backfield. Some of Shula's inability to motivate in key circumstances was exposed last season, but he is still a great strategist. However, 337 wins aside, Shula hasn't won a title in 22 years. This is his best chance in many years because attrition has hurt most of the other top teams in the league. Offensive coordinator Gary Stevens and defensive counterpart Tom Olivadotti are also under big pressure. Offensive line coach Clark, who built the lines that got the Dolphins to three straight Super Bowls in the early '70s, returns to take over for the retired Sandusky. Clark will have his hands full replacing two starters on the line, but he is one of the best technique coaches in the game.

RATING: 9

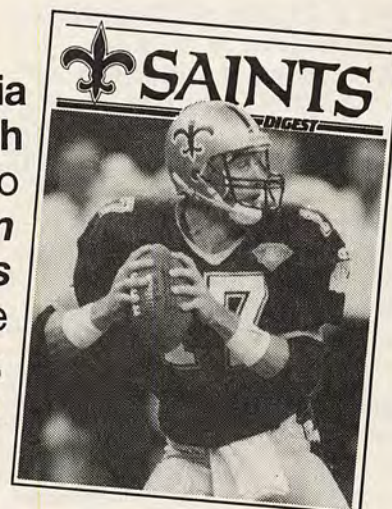
Jason Cole covers the Dolphins for the Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel.

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INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

'94 RECORD

8-8 (4-4 in Division)

COACH

Ted Marchibroda, 9th season with Colts (1975 - '79, 1992 to present), 62-63

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1987 (Lost to Cleveland, 38-21, in AFC semifinals)

HOME STADIUM

Hoosier Dome, Indianapolis, Ind. (60,129, artificial)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Don Majkowski, QB (Det.); Zefross Moss, T (Det.); Kerry Cash, TE (L.A.); Tom Sims, NT (Minn.); Rohn Stark, P (Pitt.); Cecil Gray, OL (L.A.)

Free-agent signings: Willie Anderson, WR (St.L.); Chris Gardocki, P (Chi.); Ed West, TE (G.B.); Mike Cofer, K (none)

Others: Craig Erickson, QB (acquired via trade with T.B.); Mark Jackson, WR (released); Paul Butcher, LB (selected by Car. in exp. draft); Dewell Brewer, RB (selected by Jack. in exp. draft)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Tom Batta (TEs); Greg Blache (DL); Ron Blackledge (OL); Fred Bruney (defensive assistant); Gene Huey (RBs); Lindy Infante (offensive coordinator); Jim Johnson (LBs); Hank Kuhlman (special teams); Jimmy Robinson (WRs); Pat Thomas (secondary); Vince Tobin (defensive coordinator); Tom Zupancic (strength and conditioning)

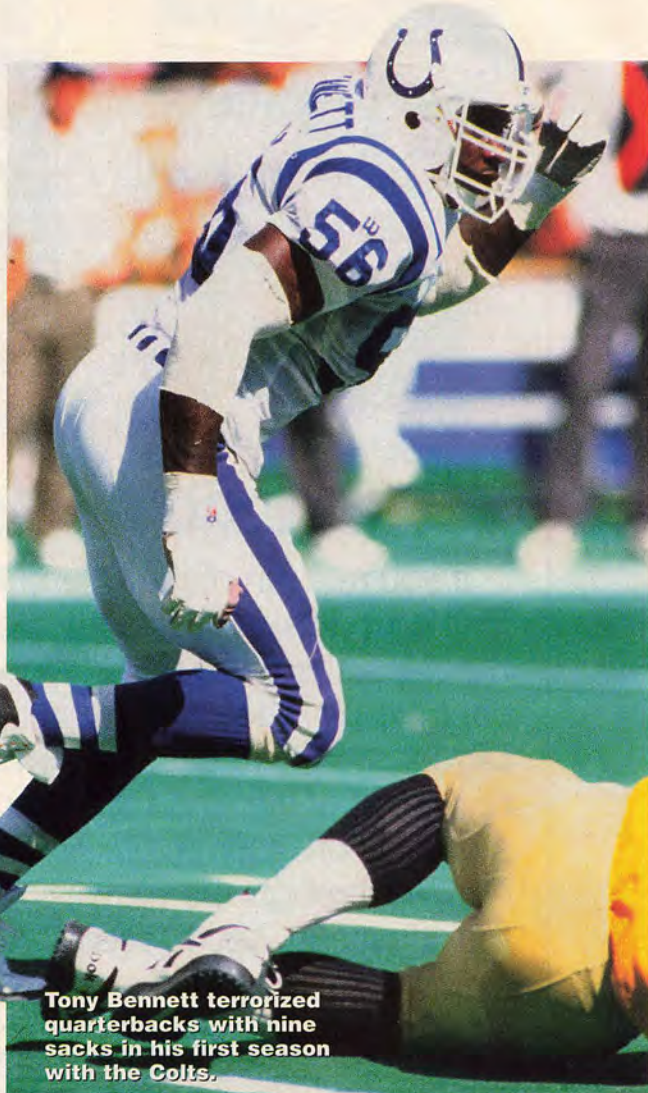
1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	CINCINNATI, 1
Sept. 10	at N.Y. Jets, 4
Sept. 17	at Buffalo, 1
Sept. 24	Open Date
Oct. 1	ST. LOUIS, 1
Oct. 8	at Miami, 4
Oct. 15	SAN FRANCISCO, 1
Oct. 22	at Los Angeles, 4
Oct. 29	N.Y. JETS, 1
Nov. 5	BUFFALO, 1
Nov. 12	at New Orleans, 1
Nov. 19	at New England, 1
Nov. 26	MIAMI, 1
Dec. 3	at Carolina, 1
Dec. 10	at Jacksonville, 1
Dec. 17	SAN DIEGO, 4
Dec. 23	NEW ENGLAND, 8
All times Eastern	

By RUSSELL S. BAXTER

By the end of the 1993 season, the Indianapolis Colts were arguably the worst team in the National Football League. But enter Bill Tobin, who had spent his previous 18 seasons with Chicago and had a hand in building the Bears into Super Bowl champions, as vice president and director of football operations. The formula for winning, according to Tobin, was a solid running game and a staunch defense. It had worked in the Windy City with Walter Payton and a relentless group of defenders, and it should work again.

So, Tobin made running back Marshall Faulk his first pick in the '94 draft, got a quarterback he trusted in Jim Harbaugh and brought in his brother, Vince, to turn around the defense. The result was an 8-8 record, doubling Indianapolis' victory total from the previous season. Now Ted Marchibroda's club has suddenly gone from also-ran to a sleeper in the AFC East title chase if the Dolphins and Patriots aren't paying attention.



Tony Bennett terrorized quarterbacks with nine sacks in his first season with the Colts.

QUARTERBACKS

Despite Bill Tobin's memorable endorsement of Harbaugh on Draft Day '94, the ex-Bears' QB was ordinary at best in his first season in Indianapolis, starting the first eight games and managing just three wins before being benched for since-departed Don Majkowski, who signed with Detroit. Harbaugh returned in December to lead the Colts to a surprise win over Miami, but ex-Jet Browning Nagle started the season finale. However, all discussion will now revolve around Craig Erickson, acquired from Tampa Bay in late April for a first-round draft choice in 1996, and possibly more. The underrated ex-Miami Hurricane finished sixth in the NFC in passing efficiency last year, throwing for 2,919 yards and 16 touchdowns, but was made expendable in Tampa because of Trent Dilfer. One-time Tobin draft choice Paul Justin spent this past spring honing his skills for the Frankfurt Galaxy in the World League of American Football and could be the new third-stringer.

RATING: 6

MILESTONES

- At his current pace (1,282 yards a season), Marshall Faulk will shatter the team's career rushing yardage record of 5,487, set from 1972-77 by Lydell Mitchell, in just over four seasons.
- Ted Marchibroda needs 12 wins to pass the legendary Don Shula (73-26-4) as the Colts' all-time winningest coach.

POWER RATING

71

RUNNING BACKS

Faulk concluded his rookie season by finishing fifth in the league in rushing (1,282) and second in the AFC in total yards from scrimmage (1,804), and shared the conference lead with San Diego's Natrone Means with a dozen touchdowns. The versatile back also tied for the team lead with 52 receptions, good for 522 yards and a score. Fullback Roosevelt Potts (77 carries, 336 yards, one TD) spent the first half of the season catching passes but was utilized more as a runner down the stretch. Former Colorado star Lamont Warren, a sixth-round pick in '94, showed breakaway ability and good hands as a rookie, as did Ronald Humphrey, who did most of his damage on special teams.

RATING: 9

RECEIVERS

Prior to last season, the Colts signed ex-Saints' speedster Floyd Turner (52 receptions, 593 yards, six TDs) and relied on Sean Dawkins (51 receptions, 742 yards, five TDs), who flashed big-play ability as a rookie in '93. Last season, the new tandem combined for 103 catches, 11 for scores. Still, Marchibroda was in need of more speed at the position, and snagged ex-Ram Willie "Flipper" Anderson, who has averaged better than 20 yards per reception in seven NFL campaigns. The Colts lost starting tight end Kerry Cash to the Raiders via free agency but signed veteran Ed West, a solid blocker who set career highs in receptions (31) and yards (377) last season with Green Bay.

RATING: 6

OFFENSIVE LINE

With the recent addition of left tackle Will Wolford and ironman center Kirk Lowdermilk, who has started 77 straight regular-season games, the Colts' once-maligned offensive front has enjoyed a reversal of fortune. However, Marchibroda must find a replacement for right tackle Zefross Moss, who surprised the team by signing with Detroit a few days after the draft. Cecil Gray, who started the last five weeks for an injured Moss, was the logical choice to replace him before signing with the Raiders as a free agent. The guard spots are secured by Joe Staysniak and Randy Dixon, although either could be supplanted by Eric Mahlum, who disappointed a bit as a rookie.

RATING: 7

DEFENSIVE LINE

Vince Tobin's presence and improved play up front enabled the Colts to go from the worst rushing defense (156.7 ypg.) to a much more respectable 12th (102.9 ypg.). The acquisition of free-agent defensive end Tony Bennett from Green Bay, the team leader in sacks (nine) last year, paid immediate dividends in his first full season at defensive end. The unsung tackle combination of Tony McCoy and Tony Siragusa combined for 200 tackles and 11 sacks, while Bernard Whittington (54 tackles) and Freddie Joe Nunn, who doesn't figure to return, split time at left end after Jon Hand went down in September with a

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
51	Trev Alberts	LB	6-4/243	2	Nebraska
33	Ashley Ambrose	DB	5-10/185	4	Miss. Valley St.
84	Flipper Anderson	WR	6-0/175	8	UCLA
81	Charles Arbuckle	TE	6-3/248	5	UCLA
80	Aaron Bailey	WR	5-10/184	2	Louisville
83	Bradford Banta	TE	6-6/255	2	USC
29	Jason Belser	DB	5-9/187	4	Oklahoma
56	Tony Bennett	LB	6-2/243	6	Mississippi
4	Dean Biasucci	K	6-0/190	11	W. Carolina
34	Ray Buchanan	DB	5-9/193	3	Louisville
3	Mike Cofer	K	6-1/195	8	N.C. State
55	Quentin Coryatt	LB	6-3/250	4	Texas A&M
39	John Covington	DB	6-0/198	2	Notre Dame
31	Douglas Craft	DB	6-0/190	1	Southern
38	Eugene Daniel	DB	5-11/188	12	Louisiana St.
87	Sean Dawkins	WR	6-4/210	3	California
69	Randy Dixon	OG	6-3/305	9	Pittsburgh
90	Steve Emtman	DT	6-4/300	4	Washington
7	Craig Erickson	QB	6-2/215	4	Miami (Fla.)
28	Marshall Faulk	RB	5-10/200	2	San Diego St.
17	Chris Gardocki	P	6-1/196	5	Clemson
59	Stephen Grant	LB	6-0/242	4	West Virginia
30	Derwin Gray	DB	5-11/198	3	Brigham Young
12	Jim Harbaugh	QB	6-3/215	9	Michigan
54	Jeff Herrod	LB	6-0/249	8	Mississippi
25	Ronald Humphrey	RB	5-10/211	2	Miss. Valley St.
23	Leonard Humphries	DB	5-9/180	2	Penn State
11	Paul Justin	QB	6-4/202	1	Arizona State
63	Kirk Lowdermilk	C	6-4/280	11	Ohio State
65	Eric Mahlum	OG	6-4/285	2	California
74	Jason Mathews	OT	6-5/284	2	Texas A&M
61	Tony McCoy	DT	6-0/279	4	Florida
57	Devon McDonald	LB	6-4/248	3	Notre Dame
47	Thomas McLemore	TE	6-5/250	3	Southern
18	Browning Nagle	QB	6-3/225	5	Louisville
93	Freddie Joe Nunn	DE	6-5/255	11	Mississippi
64	Garin Patrick	OL	6-3/265	1	Louisville
42	Roosevelt Potts	RB	6-0/245	3	NE Louisiana
97	Scott Radecic	LB	6-3/240	12	Penn State
52	Brian Ratigan	LB	6-4/241	2	Notre Dame
58	Glen Sanders	LB	6-1/240	3	Louisiana Tech
98	Tony Siragusa	DT	6-3/315	6	Pittsburgh
15	Terry Smith	WR	6-0/200	1	Clemson
86	Brian Stablein	WR	6-1/191	2	Ohio State
79	Joe Staysniak	OG	6-4/302	5	Ohio State
49	David Tate	DB	6-1/200	8	Colorado
88	Floyd Turner	WR	5-11/198	7	NW Louisiana
71	Kipp Vickers	OL	6-2/288	2	Miami (Fla.)
21	Lamont Warren	RB	5-11/194	2	Colorado
36	Damon Watts	DB	5-10/173	2	Indiana
85	Ed West	TE	6-1/259	12	Auburn
75	Royal West	DT	6-3/265	R	Texas Christian
95	Bernard Whittington	DE	6-6/257	2	Indiana
67	Will Wolford	OT	6-5/300	10	Vanderbilt

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1	Ellis Johnson	DE/T	6-2/290	Florida
2	Ken Dilger	TE	6-5/249	Illinois
3	Zack Crockett	DB	6-0/190	Florida St.
4	Ray McElroy	DB	5-11/188	E. Illinois
5	Derek West	OT	6-8/298	Colorado
6	Brian Gelzheiser	LB	6-1/235	Penn State
7	Jessie Cox	LB	6-2/222	Texas Southern



He never won a Heisman, but Marshall Faulk showed there may be some NFL rushing titles in his future.

broken leg. In reserve is former No. 1 overall pick Steve Emtman, whose knee injuries have, sadly, reduced his ability and playing time considerably.

RATING: 7

LINEBACKERS

Veteran Jeff Herrod (200 tackles) led the team in stops for the fifth time in six seasons, as he made the switch from weak side linebacker to the middle in Vince Tobin's 4-3 alignment, flip-flopping spots with Quentin Coryatt, who in three NFL seasons has yet to display the dominant ability he displayed at Texas A&M. Stephen Grant started the final 12 games at the other outside spot and finished second on the team with 161 tackles (two forced fumbles), posting double-digit totals in nine of those contests while finding time to make 19 stops on special teams. Still, the former West Virginia standout will give way to talented Trev Alberts, the Colts' other first-round pick in '94 who didn't play until the final five games due to elbow surgery but recorded nine tackles and a pair of sacks in spot duty.

RATING: 7

SECONDARY

The Colts spent most of the year experimenting with different combinations, but during the final six weeks of '94, they started the foursome of cornerbacks Ray Buchanan and Eugene Daniel, strong safety David Tate and coveted free safety Jason Belser, the latter signing a three-year offer sheet with Carolina in mid-April that was eventually matched by the Colts. And it's no coincidence that not only did the entire defense play well down the stretch, but 10 of Indianapolis' 18 interceptions came in their final half-dozen outings. But the real story was Buchanan, who started the first 10 games at free safety and whose eight interceptions ranked third in the NFL; three of those thefts were returned for scores.

RATING: 7

SPECIAL TEAMS

The signing of punter Chris Gardocki, formerly of the Bears, spelled the end for Rohn Stark (now with Pittsburgh), the last player with ties to the team's days in Baltimore. Gardocki, who ranked last in the league in gross average (37.8) a year ago after a strong '93 season, can also

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	...HOUSTON	...Won, 45-21
Sept. 11	...at Tampa Bay	...Lost, 24-10
Sept. 18	...at Pittsburgh	...Lost, 31-21
Sept. 25	...CLEVELAND	...Lost, 21-14
Oct. 2	...SEATTLE	...Won, 17-15
Oct. 9	...at N.Y. Jets	...Lost, 16-6
Oct. 16	...at Buffalo	...Won, 27-17
Oct. 23	...WASHINGTON	...Lost, 41-27
Oct. 30	...N.Y. JETS	...Won, 28-25
Nov. 6	...at Miami	...Lost, 22-21
Nov. 20	...at Cincinnati	...Won, 17-13
Nov. 27	...NEW ENGLAND	...Lost, 12-10
Dec. 4	...at Seattle	...Won, 31-19
Dec. 11	...at New England	...Lost, 28-13
Dec. 18	...MIAMI	...Won, 10-6
Dec. 24	...BUFFALO	...Won, 10-9

handle kickoffs. That could take some pressure off veteran placekicker Dean Biasucci, who comes off his third so-so season (16 of 24 FGs) in four years, with half of his misses coming between 30-39 yards. The Colts signed former 49er Mike Cofer in April as a possible replacement for Biasucci, an unrestricted free agent who has yet to be resigned. Humphrey finished sixth in the AFC in kickoff return average (22.4), including a 95-yard score against the Steelers. However, Dewell Brewer, whose 75-yard punt return for a touchdown beat the Dolphins in December, was lost to Carolina in the expansion draft.

RATING: 6

DRAFT

Both Tobins were very fortunate and quite happy to see Ellis Johnson (Florida) last until the 15th pick. The All-SEC defensive tackle, who is a solid run defender and can get to the quarterback, will likely move to the outside as a rookie. Tight end Ken Dilger (Illinois) was their No. 2 selection, a sure-handed receiver and a decent blocker who can also deep snap, which could make Bradford Banta expendable. Fullback Zack Crockett (Florida State), who scored 11 touchdowns for the Seminoles last year, will spell Potts on occasion and provide a one-man caravan for Faulk.

RATING: 8

COACHING

It's been an up-and-down three seasons for Marchibroda during his second tour of duty with the Colts, but the organization can't find anyone better. Over the past 20 seasons, the franchise has totaled 124 victories, exactly half (62) by Marchibroda during his two stints with the team and an equal amount by the other six coached between his tenures. The Indianapolis offense improved last season, due mainly to the addition of Faulk, and should be even better this year with one-time Packer head coach Lindy Infante calling the shots.

RATING: 8

Russell S. Baxter works for ESPN.



BUFFALO BILLS

'94 RECORD

7-9 (3-5 in Division)

COACH

Marv Levy, 10th season with Buffalo, 96-55; 127-97 overall

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1993 (Lost to Dallas, 30-13, in Super Bowl XXVIII)

HOME STADIUM

Rich Stadium, Orchard Park, N.Y. (80,290, artificial)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Darryl Talley, LB (Atl.); Don Beebe, WR (Car.); Pete Metzelaars, TE (Car.); Frank Reich, QB (Car.); Mike Lodish, NT (Den.); Mike Dumas, S (Jack.); Mickey Washington, CB (Jack.); Jerome Henderson, CB/S (Phi.); Oliver Barnett, DE (S.F.); Marvcur Patton, LB (Wash.)

Free-agent signings: Jim Jeffcoat, DE (Dall.); Bryce Paup, LB (G.B.); Ted Washington, NT (Den.)

Others: Kenneth Davis, RB (released); Jeff Wright, NT (released)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Tom Bresnahan (off. coord./OL); Ted Cottrell (LBs); Bruce DeHaven (special teams); Charlie Joiner (WRs); Rusty Jones (strength and cond.); Don Lawrence (off. quality control/TEs); Chuck Lester (asst. head coach/asst. LBs); Wade Phillips (def. coord.); Elijah Pitts (asst. head coach/RBs); Dick Roach (DBs); Dan Sekanovich (DL); Jim Shofner (QBs)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	at Denver, 8
Sept. 10	CAROLINA, 1
Sept. 17	INDIANAPOLIS, 1
Sept. 24	Open Date
Oct. 2	at Cleveland, 9
Oct. 8	N.Y. JETS, 1
Oct. 15	SEATTLE, 1
Oct. 23	at New England, 9
Oct. 29	at Miami, 4
Nov. 5	at Indianapolis, 1
Nov. 12	ATLANTA, 1
Nov. 19	at N.Y. Jets, 4
Nov. 26	NEW ENGLAND, 1
Dec. 3	at San Francisco, 8
Dec. 10	at St. Louis, 1
Dec. 17	MIAMI, 1
Dec. 24	HOUSTON, 1
All times Eastern	

By SAL MAIORANA

Game programs will be a hot commodity on Sept. 10 at Rich Stadium when the Bills make their first home appearance of 1995 against the expansion Carolina Panthers.

The 80,000 fans won't recognize a majority of the Bills players — not to mention the Carolina newcomers who will take the field — because a tumultuous offseason has given the Bills a vastly new look. The wrecking ball that is free agency and its evil twin, the salary cap, took a huge chunk out of a Buffalo team that before last year's 7-9 debacle had appeared in four consecutive Super Bowls.

No fewer than seventeen players from the final 1994 squad have either departed via free agency or become salary cap casualties, nearly one-third of the 53-man roster. Fifteen of those players were with the Bills for at least one Super Bowl and nine were around for all four Super Bowl losses.

"We hope we are never in a rebuilding stage," head coach Marv Levy said. "Will there be turnover? Sure, and free agency causes that. But I think there is a forgetfulness that there were some fine players here when I first came here, people like Joe Devlin, Fred Smerlas, Steve Freeman, Lucious Sanford, who were replaced by the Jeff Wrights, Darryl Talley and so on. There's a natural evolution that takes place."

However, this has been more like a revolution than an evolution. Gone are offensive linemen John Davis and Jerry Crafts, defensive linemen Wright, Oliver Barnett and Mike Lodish, linebackers Talley, Marvcur Patton and Keith Goganious, quarterback Frank Reich, running back Kenneth Davis, wide receivers Don Beebe and Bill Brooks, defensive backs Mickey Washington, Jerome Henderson and Mike Dumas, and tight ends Pete Metzelaars



Thurman Thomas will be seeking his seventh straight 1,000-yard season in '95.

MILESTONES

- ◆ If Thurman Thomas rushes for 1,000 yards this season, he will tie Eric Dickerson's NFL record of seven consecutive seasons over 1,000.
- ◆ Jim Kelly needs 473 yards to become the 19th quarterback in NFL history to reach 30,000 career yards passing.
- ◆ Andre Reed needs 24 receptions to become the sixth receiver in league history to reach 700 career receptions.

POWER RATING
70

BILLS

and Vince Marrow. In addition, defensive coordinator Walt Corey was fired and replaced by Wade Phillips.

QUARTERBACKS

Two of Jim Kelly's three starting receivers — Beebe and Bill Brooks — left town on the same day when Beebe signed with Carolina and Brooks and his \$1.2 million salary were waived. This leaves Kelly with his favorite target, Andre Reed, and a slew of unproven options.

This is not the kind of adjustment Kelly needs, not at age 35, playing behind a questionable offensive line and coming off fairly major knee surgery. Before he got hurt in Buffalo's 14th game, Kelly, entering his 10th NFL season, had the Bills in the playoff race and was enjoying a productive season. He finished with a 63.6 completion percentage, second-best in his sensational career. Rookie Todd Collins, the second-round draft choice out of Michigan, is projected to win the backup job over Rick Strom.

RATING: 8

RUNNING BACKS

Thurman Thomas, one of the NFL's premier backs, has always had the luxury of taking himself out of games when he felt the need to rest because, as he said, "Kenny Davis could start for just about every other team in the NFL." Well, maybe Davis will get that opportunity now, because the Bills didn't offer him a contract, leaving them dangerously thin in the backfield.

Thomas showed definite signs of slowing down last season. After averaging 4.8 or 4.9 yards per rush from 1990-'92, Thomas averaged 3.8 in 1994 after a 3.7 average in '93. Last season, he barely reached 1,000 yards and his 50 pass receptions went for only 349 yards, a 6.98-yards-per-reception average that must get better.

With Davis gone, second-year pro Yonel Jourdain will back up Thomas, unless Bobby Humphrey, back in football after a one-year absence, can regain the potential he showed in 1990 when he rushed for 1,202 yards with Denver.

Carwell Gardner and Nate Turner are the fullbacks, but the Bills haven't used a fullback regularly since 1990.

RATING: 7

RECEIVERS

With Beebe, Bill Brooks and Metzelaars gone, the Bills lost three of their top five pass-catchers. The departed trio combined for 131 receptions worth 1,437 yards and 11 touchdowns last year. Beebe was Kelly's favorite deep ball target, but if second-year pro Bucky Brooks can recover from knee surgery and regain his 4.4 speed, Beebe may not even be missed. Bill Brooks was a reliable possession receiver, but the Bills hope Russell Copeland, Damon Thomas or '95 fourth-round draft choice Justin Armour, out of Stanford, can fill that role.

Reed is back for his 11th season, and he's coming off his greatest year yet. He caught a career-high 90 passes for 1,303 yards and eight touchdowns and earned his seventh straight trip to the Pro Bowl, a well-deserved honor for a player that shows no signs of slowing down.

TEAM ROSTER

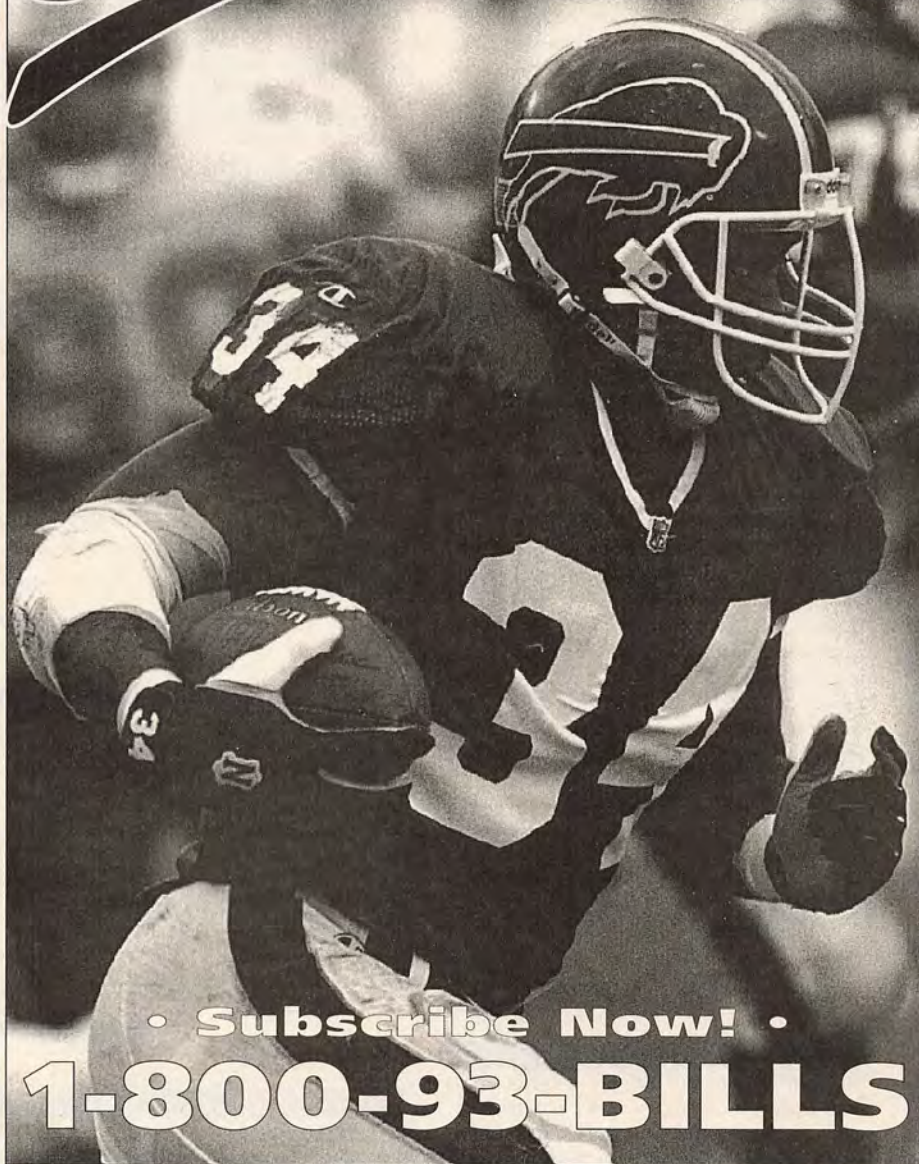
NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
97	Cornelius Bennett	LB	6-2/238	9	Alabama
81	Bucky Brooks	WR	6-0/190	2	North Carolina
96	Monty Brown	LB	6-0/228	3	Ferris State
22	Jeff Burris	DB	6-0/204	2	Notre Dame
2	Steve Christie	K	6-0/185	6	William & Mary
87	Robert Coons	TE	6-5/249	1	Pittsburgh
85	Russell Copeland	WR	6-0/200	3	Memphis State
43	Matt Darby	S	6-1/200	4	UCLA
62	Mike Devlin	G/C	6-1/293	3	Iowa
70	John Fina	OL	6-4/270	4	Arizona
35	Carwell Gardner	FB	6-2/244	6	Louisville
90	Phil Hansen	DE	6-5/278	5	N.D. State
76	Steve Hoyem	OT	6-7/287	2	Stanford
67	Kent Hull	C	6-5/284	5	Miss. State
26	Bobby Humphrey	RB	6-1/205	5	Alabama
77	Jim Jeffcoat	DE	6-5/280	13	Arizona State
84	Lonnie Johnson	TE	6-3/230	2	Florida State
20	Henry Jones	S	5-11/197	5	Illinois
30	Yonel Jourdain	RB	5-11/204	2	So. Illinois
12	Jim Kelly	QB	6-3/224	10	Miami (Fla.)
1	Steve Krantz	K	6-2/185	1	Kutztown
68	Corbin Lacina	OL	6-4/297	3	Augustana (S.D.)
29	Le-Lo Lang	CB	5-11/185	5	Washington
63	Adam Lingner	C	6-4/268	13	Illinois
72	Corey Louchiey	OT	6-7/305	1	South Carolina
55	Mark Maddox	LB	6-1/233	5	No. Michigan
9	Chris Mohr	P	6-5/215	6	Alabama
60	Jerry Ostroski	G	6-4/310	2	Tulsa
74	Glenn Parker	G/T	6-5/305	6	Arizona
99	James Patton	DL	6-3/287	3	Texas
95	Bryce Paup	LB	6-5/247	6	Northern Iowa
58	Marlo Perry	LB	6-4/250	2	Jackson State
72	Ed Phillion	DT	6-2/273	2	Ferris State
94	Mark Pike	DE	6-4/273	9	Georgia Tech
83	Andre Reed	WR	6-2/190	11	Kutztown
59	Sam Rogers	LB	6-3/245	2	Colorado
24	Kurt Schultz	S	6-1/204	4	E. Washington
78	Bruce Smith	DE	6-4/273	11	Virginia Tech
28	Thomas Smith	CB	5-11/188	3	North Carolina
11	Rick Strom	QB	6-2/197	7	Georgia Tech
89	Steve Tasker	WR	5-9/181	11	Northwestern
82	Damon Thomas	WR	6-2/215	2	Wayne State
34	Thurman Thomas	RB	5-10/198	8	Oklahoma State
21	Nate Turner	RB	6-1/255	3	Nebraska
92	Ted Washington	NT	6-4/315	5	Louisville
50	David White	LB	6-2/235	2	Nebraska
18	Tyrone Williams	WR	6-5/220	3	Western Ontario

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1	Ruben Brown	C	6-3/304	Pittsburgh
2	Todd Collins	QB	6-4/224	Michigan
3A	Marlon Kerner	DB	5-10/187	Ohio State
3B	Damien Covington	LB	5-11/236	North Carolina State
4A	Ken Irvin	DB	5-10/182	Memphis
4B	Justin Armour	WR	6-4/221	Stanford
4C	Tony Kline	TE	6-4/251	Stanford
5	John Holecsek	LB	6-2/238	Illinois
6	Shannon Clavette	DE	6-2/283	Colorado
7A	Tom Nutton	C	6-4/276	Western Michigan
7B	Darick Holmes	RB	6-0/226	Portland State

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Entering his second decade in the NFL, Bruce Smith shows no sign of slowing down.

Lonnie Johnson, a second-round draft choice in 1994, is Metzelaars' replacement at tight end. Johnson needs to work on his blocking.

RATING: 7

OFFENSIVE LINE

Center Kent Hull is a solid veteran, but he's 34. Tackles John Fina and Glenn Parker are both better suited to playing guard. Guards Corbin Lacina and Jerry Ostroski are vastly inexperienced. This is the offensive line the Bills take to training camp, and it's a potential disaster.

With that in mind, Ruben Brown (6-foot-3, 304 pounds) was tabbed in the first round and he will be looked upon to battle — and perhaps beat out — Ostroski at right guard. There is no such thing as a grace period for a rookie with this line. Second-year players Steve Hoyem and Corey Louichey, both drafted as tackles last year, are now projected as guards, so now, the Bills need help on the outside.

The Bills allowed 41 sacks last season and averaged 3.8 yards per rush.

RATING: 5

DEFENSIVE LINE

Bruce Smith has complained for years about the constant double- and triple-teaming he is forced

to endure. Last year was no different. Nose tackle Wright struggled after missing the first four games due to shoulder surgery and never came back sufficiently. As a result, he was released. The other end, Phil Hansen, played well in spurts and had 5.5 sacks and 10 QB pressures. Still, Smith produced 10 sacks — his eighth double-digit season — 92 tackles, 16 pressures, five forced fumbles and two recoveries.

The Bills were wise to bolster the front line by signing pass-rushing defensive end Jim Jeffcoat from Dallas and nose tackle Ted Washington from Denver. Jeffcoat will play in passing situations and Washington will try to forget about his lackluster first four years in the NFL. Washington played under Phillips at Denver last year and, when Phillips was hired in Buffalo, the Bills' new defensive coordinator played a key role in bringing Washington with him.

RATING: 7

LINEBACKERS

The Bills made Cornelius Bennett their franchise player, denying him the opportunity to test the free agent market. This move angered Bennett, and now he must put aside his ill feelings and produce a big year or else his stock will drop on the open market next year.

Veteran Talley, who never missed a game in 12 years with the Bills — playing a team-record 204 straight — was unceremoniously dumped. The Bills didn't even offer him a contract and he finally signed with Atlanta. In his place will be Bennett, switching from the strong side to the weak side. Now on the strong side is free agent acquisition Bryce Paup, a rising star with the Packers who fell into the Bills' laps. They weren't really pursuing him, but Paup announced he was interested in going to Buffalo and a deal was struck.

Mark Maddox will line up at left inside linebacker, but a battle royale will be staged for the other inside position between Monty Brown, Marlo Perry and draft choices Damien Covington of North Carolina State and Illinois' John Holecek.

RATING: 8

SECONDARY

The Bills spent four of their previous five No. 1 draft choices on defensive backs, and that may begin to pay dividends this year. Strong safety Henry Jones (No. 1, 1991) was re-signed and is now the highest-paid safety in the NFL. Thomas Smith (1993) has a year under his belt at right corner and Jeff Burris (1994) played often in nickel and dime situations and seems ready to take over at left corner.

Free safety Matt Darby intercepted four passes, but seemed tentative playing center field. Hard-hitting nickel back Kurt Schultze is back, and rookie draft choices Ken Irvin out of Memphis and Marlon Kerner from Ohio State will be in the mix at dime.

The Bills' 19 interceptions tied for 19th in the league and Buffalo was 23rd in the NFL against the pass (228.8 yards per game).

RATING: 7

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	... N.Y. JETS	Lost, 23-3
Sept. 11	...at New England	Won, 38-35
Sept. 18	...at Houston	Won, 15-7
Sept. 26	...DENVER	Won, 27-20
Oct. 2	...at Chicago	Lost, 20-13
Oct. 9	...MIAMI	Won, 21-11
Oct. 16	...INDIANAPOLIS	Lost, 27-17
Oct. 30	...KANSAS CITY	Won, 44-10
Nov. 6	...at N.Y. Jets	Lost, 22-17
Nov. 14	...at Pittsburgh	Lost, 23-10
Nov. 20	...GREEN BAY	Won, 29-20
Nov. 24	...at Detroit	Lost, 35-21
Dec. 4	...at Miami	Won, 42-31
Dec. 11	...MINNESOTA	Lost, 21-17
Dec. 18	...NEW ENGLAND	Lost, 41-17
Dec. 24	...at Indianapolis	Lost, 10-9

SPECIAL TEAMS

This is one area of particular strength and stability. Kicker Steve Christie has one of the strongest legs in the league, and he made all 38 of his extra points and 24 of 28 field goals, including 17 in a row to start the year. Chris Mohr is a perfect punter for windy Rich Stadium because he gets great height and prevents returns. Burris averaged 10.4 yards per punt return, but the kickoff return unit struggled (18.7 yards per return, third-worst in the league).

RATING: 8

DRAFT

The Bills had 11 choices and they picked at least one player at every positional area except kicker/punter. Brown was superb at Pitt and should help right away. The front office thinks Kelly can play at least three more years, but Collins has the tools to become a solid starter sooner if Kelly falls short of that prediction or gets hurt. Covington's height (6-2) was considered the primary reason why he wasn't a first-rounder, so he could be a steal in the third round.

RATING: 6

COACHING

Levy has always had a philosophy that only the rare rookie plays much in his first year. In fact, only six have started for Levy during his Buffalo tenure and three of those started due to injuries to the regular players. But times have changed and Levy has had to adapt. He now admits that he will be forced to go with younger players. Phillips, a bust as head coach in Denver, was a top-notch defensive coordinator before that and he should immediately help a defense that had become stagnant under Walt Corey. Tom Bresnahan is an excellent offensive line coach, but as the coordinator, he has come under fire for slowing down the no-huddle offense.

RATING: 7

Sal Maiorana covers the Bills for the Rochester Democrat & Chronicle.



NEW YORK JETS

'94 RECORD

6-10 (4-4 in Division)

COACH

Rich Kotite, 1st season with Jets,
37-29 overall

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1991 (lost to Houston, 17-10, in Wild Card game)

HOME STADIUM

Giants Stadium, East Rutherford, N.J.
(77,311, artificial)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Jeff Criswell, OT (K.C.); James Hasty, CB (K.C.); Clifford Hicks, DB (S.F.); Anthony Johnson, RB (Chi.); Jeff Lageman, DE (Jack.); Eric Thomas, CB (N.O.); Dwayne White, OG (St. L.)

Free-agent signings: Bubby Brister, QB (Phi.); Matt Brock, DE (G.B.); Dexter Carter, RB (S.F.); Gary Jones, S (Pitt.); Todd Scott, S (Minn.); Eric Howard, DT (NYG)

Others: Rob Moore, WR (traded to Ariz.); Ronald Moore, RB (acq. in trade with Ariz.); Paul Frase (selected by Jack. in exp. draft); Jack Trudeau, QB (selected by Car. in exp. draft)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Zeke Bratkowski (off. coord./QBs); Peter Guinta (DBs); Ray Hamilton (DL); Richard Mann (WRs); Bill Muir (OL); Ken Rose (special teams); Jim Vechiarella (def. coord./LBs); Dick Wood (RBs)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3 at Miami, 4
Sept. 10 INDIANAPOLIS, 4
Sept. 17 JACKSONVILLE, 4
Sept. 24 at Atlanta, 4
Oct. 1 LOS ANGELES, 8
Oct. 8 at Buffalo, 1
Oct. 15 at Carolina, 4
Oct. 22 MIAMI, 1
Oct. 29 at Indianapolis, 1
Nov. 5 NEW ENGLAND, 1
Nov. 12 Open Date
Nov. 19 BUFFALO, 4
Nov. 26 at Seattle, 4
Dec. 3 ST. LOUIS, 1
Dec. 10 at New England, 1
Dec. 17 at Houston, 1
Dec. 24 NEW ORLEANS, 1
All times Eastern

By JIM CORBETT

Sometimes, you have to tear something down in order to build it back up again. Especially when the house seems haunted.

The New York Jets, who have done more rebuilding in the last decade than Bob Vila, are at it again.

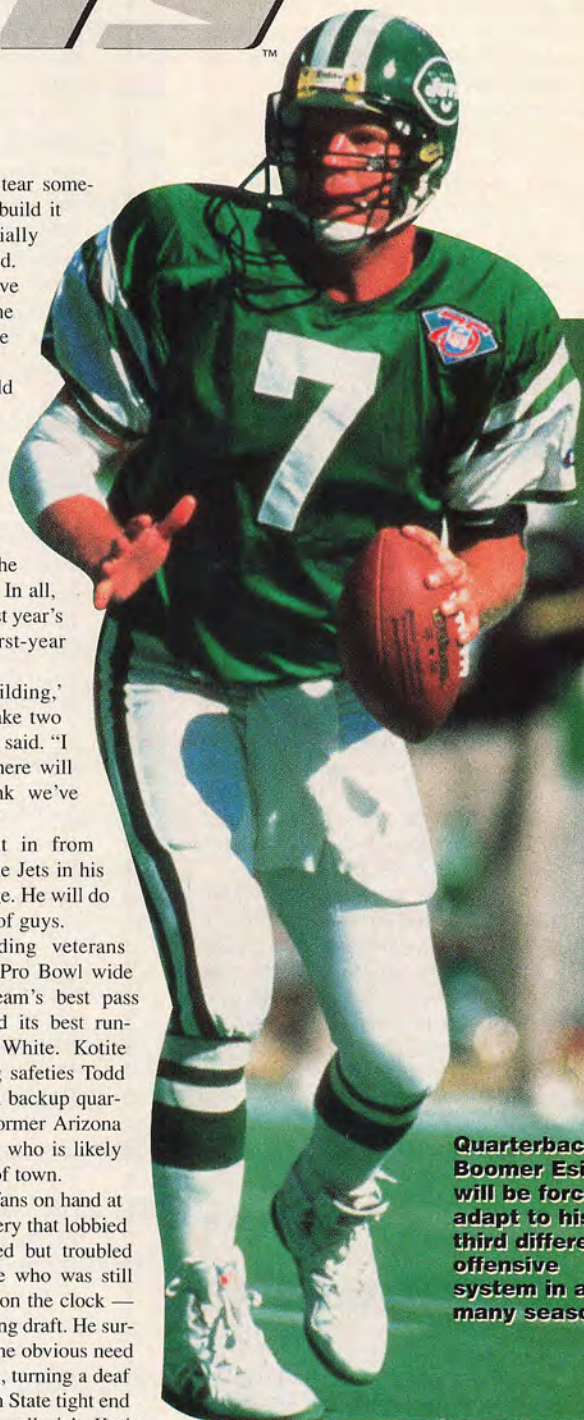
In this episode of "This Old Haunted House," new coach Rich Kotite insists the Jets are simply "retooling." He may not care to admit it, but any team that dismisses starters like jurors in the O.J. Simpson trial is rebuilding. The turnover has been enormous. In all, nine starters are gone from last year's 6-10 disaster that cost first-year coach Pete Carroll his job.

"When you say, 'rebuilding,' you're saying it's going to take two or three years to win," Kotite said. "I don't have that mentality. There will be new starters. But I think we've improved this football team."

Kotite, who was brought in from Philadelphia, is renovating the Jets in his tough-guy, street-fighter image. He will do things his way with his kind of guys.

Gone are revered-but-fading veterans Ronnie Lott and Art Monk, Pro Bowl wide receiver Rob Moore, the team's best pass rusher in Jeff Lageman, and its best run-blocker in guard Dwayne White. Kotite brought in young, big-hitting safeties Todd Scott and Gary Jones, proven backup quarterback Bubby Brister and former Arizona running back Ronald Moore, who is likely to push Johnny Johnson out of town.

Contrary to the opinion of fans on hand at April's NFL Draft — the gallery that lobbied for Warren Sapp, the talented but troubled Miami (Fla.) defensive tackle who was still available when the Jets went on the clock — Kotite believes he had a winning draft. He surprised everyone by ignoring the obvious need for UCLA receiver J.J. Stokes, turning a deaf ear to the fans and taking Penn State tight end Kyle Brady with the ninth overall pick. Kotite intends to transform the Jets into a two-tight end,



Quarterback Boomer Esiason will be forced to adapt to his third different offensive system in as many seasons.

MILESTONES

- Nick Lowery enters this season with 1,559 career points, second all-time behind Jan Stenerud's 1,699.
- Lowery's 349 field goals are second all-time behind Stenerud's 373.
- Boomer Esiason enters the season 16th on the all-time list with 207 career touchdown passes. Jim Hart is 15th with 209 and Terry Bradshaw is 14th with 212.

POWER RATING
65

smash-mouth offense mirroring the 1994 Pittsburgh Steelers.

The Jets may look like pretenders again. But Kotite insists they won't be the same old chokers.

"This team will be mentally tougher," he said. "That's how you win in the fourth quarter."

The additions of free agents such as Brister, Jones, Scott, defensive lineman Erik Howard and running back/return specialist Dexter Carter will plug some of the critical leaks sprung by the Jets in the offseason. But the offensive line and secondary are starting over and the receiving cast is unproven.

Owner Leon Hess wants results now and declared as much when he hired Kotite. A soft fifth-place schedule that features games against both expansion teams seems favorable, especially come December when the Jets face only one team — New England — that had a winning record in 1994.

But, with so many depleted areas, reserving any optimism until next year is a better bet. At least Kotite has a plan and the Jets seem headed in the right direction.

QUARTERBACKS

Kotite likes his quarterback package of Boomer Esiason, Brister and Glenn Foley. His power running attack and two tight-end sets will better utilize Esiason's masterful play-faking ability, something the Jets got away from last season when they inexplicably attempted to adopt San Francisco's vaunted West Coast offense with personnel not even vaguely reminiscent of the 49ers. Esiason took the Jets to the brink of playoff contention, but his own personal collapse mirrored — if not completely caused — the team's December demise. He finished with 17 touchdowns and 13 interceptions, but Esiason threw only one touchdown pass in four December losses.

It doesn't figure to help that Esiason, 33, is going on his third offensive system in three seasons. In addition, Moore's departure leaves the offense without a downfield receiving threat. But if Johnny Mitchell develops as an H-back in the Shannon Sharpe-mold, it should take some pressure off.

Brister is a trusted bullpen quarterback who Kotite turned to when he benched Randall Cunningham in Philadelphia. If Esiason slumps or is injured, Kotite won't hesitate to turn to Brister. Foley is still developing, but the Jets like his arm, confidence and potential.

RATING: 6

RUNNING BACKS

"Ronald Moore is going to run someone out of town," Kotite said.

The list of candidates is formidable. The Moore-for-Moore swap with Arizona left the Jets with more backs than they needed. The backfield already consisted of Johnson, Richie Anderson, Adrian Murrell and Brad Baxter, four players who, when given specific role responsibilities, form a productive unit. Then, the Jets added the 49ers' Carter, a good receiver out of the backfield who was brought aboard primarily to strengthen the special teams. Add Moore to the mix, and someone's got to go.

That someone appears to be Johnson, a versatile back who had a disappointing season (931 yards, three touchdowns) and was left unprotected

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
18	Alan Allen	WR	6-1/186	1	Idaho
20	Richie Anderson	RB	6-2/225	3	Penn State
88	Stevie Anderson	WR	6-5/215	2	Grambling
30	Brad Baxter	FB	6-1/235	6	Alabama State
84	Fred Baxter	TE	6-3/260	3	Auburn
47	LaVar Ball	TE	6-5/263	1	CS-Los Angeles
98	Kurt Barber	DE	6-4/249	4	USC
78	Lou Benfatti	DT	6-4/278	2	Penn State
6	Bubby Brister	QB	6-3/207	10	NE Louisiana
94	Matt Brock	DT	6-5/280	7	Oregon
76	James Brown	T	6-6/321	3	Virginia State
46	Paul Burke	TE	6-3/244	1	Idaho
50	Glenn Cadrez	LB	6-3/245	4	Houston
35	Dexter Carter	RB/KR	5-9/170	6	Florida State
92	Tony Casillas	DT	6-3/278	9	Oklahoma
59	Kyle Clifton	LB	6-4/236	12	TCU
5	Sean Conley	K	6-0/192	1	Pittsburgh
52	Cal Dixon	C/G	6-4/282	4	Florida
62	Roger Duffy	G/C	6-3/294	6	Penn State
7	Boomer Esiason	QB	6-5/224	12	Maryland
66	Donald Evans	DE/DT	6-2/282	8	Winston-Salem St.
4	Glenn Foley	QB	6-2/205	2	Boston College
15	Tom Garlick	WR	5-11/180	1	Fordham
31	Aaron Glenn	CB/KR	5-9/185	2	Texas A&M
21	Victor Green	CB/S	5-9/195	3	Akron
11	Brian Hansen	P	6-4/215	11	Sioux Falls
55	Bobby Houston	LB	6-2/245	5	N.C. State
74	Erik Howard	DT	6-4/275	10	Washington State
39	Johnny Johnson	RB	6-3/220	6	San Jose St.
25	Gary Jones	S	6-1/217	6	Texas A&M
54	Marvin Jones	LB	6-2/249	3	Florida St.
32	Fred Lester	FB	6-0/232	1	Alabama State
57	Mo Lewis	LB	6-3/250	5	Georgia
8	Nick Lowery	K	6-4/205	16	Dartmouth
67	Everett McIver	G	6-6/315	2	Elizabeth City St.
75	Siupeli Malamala	G/T	6-5/315	4	Washington
86	Johnny Mitchell	TE	6-3/241	4	Nebraska
33	Ronald Moore	RB	5-10/220	3	Pittsburg State
42	Adrian Murrell	RB	5-11/212	3	West Virginia
95	Alfred Oglesby	DT	6-4/276	5	Houston
89	Orlando Parker	WR/KR	5-11/190	2	Troy State
37	Anthony Prior	CB/S	5-11/185	3	Washington St.
38	Todd Scott	S	5-10/207	5	SW Louisiana
45	Otis Smith	CB	5-11/184	6	Missouri
27	Pat Terrell	FS	6-2/210	6	Notre Dame
23	Marcus Turner	CB/S	6-0/190	7	UCLA
97	Marvin Washington	DE	6-6/272	7	Idaho
77	Matt Willig	T	6-8/305	3	USC
72	Terrence Wisdom	G	6-4/300	1	Syracuse
87	Ryan Yarborough	WR	6-2/290	2	Wyoming

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1a	Kyle Brady	TE	6-6/260	Penn State
1b	Hugh Douglas	DE	6-2/255	Central St. (Ohio)
2	Matt O'Dwyer	G	6-5/308	Northwestern
4a	Melvin Hayes	T	6-6/329	Mississippi State
4b	Tyrone Davis	WR	6-4/229	Virginia
5	Carl Greenwood	CB	5-11/186	UCLA
6	Eddie Mason	LB	6-0/230	North Carolina State
7	Curtis Ceaser	WR	6-2/185	Grambling

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The Jets are on the rise and determined to fight for the 1995 crown in the wide-open AFC! New coach Rich Kotite is just the disciplinarian this team has needed for the longest time. With a large free-agent class headed by Dexter Carter joining current Jets stand-outs like Mo Lewis and Johnny Mitchell, the Jets are poised for a playoff run. You don't want to miss any of the excitement, so subscribe to the **Jets Confidential** newspaper NOW!

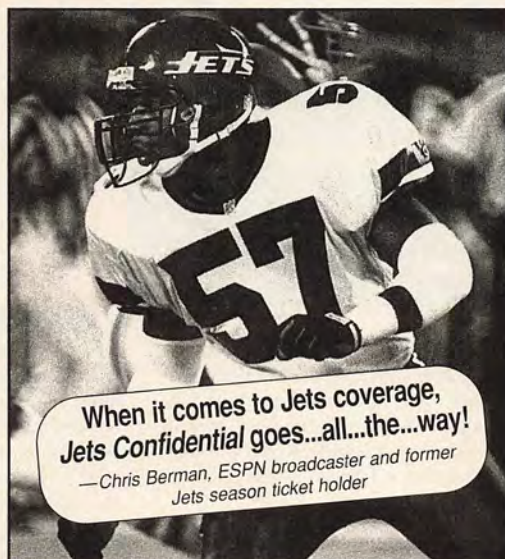
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Aaron Glenn is the sole returning starter from last year's secondary.

ed during the expansion draft. Baxter is a reliable fullback and a strong threat on the goal line. If second-year backs Anderson and Murrell — both of whom averaged 4.8 yards per carry in limited action in '94 — emerge, Kotite will have a deep rotation even if Johnson is sent packing.

RATING: 7

RECEIVERS

Of all the Jets' weaknesses, this department is the most glaring.

Moore is gone, as is future Hall of Famer Monk, who was good for at least a reception or two every game. Their departures left the Jets with a less-than-intimidating trio of Ryan Yarbrough, Orlando Parker and Stevie Anderson, who combined to catch a meager 16 passes last season.

The Jets were teased by Alvin Harper, passed up on Stokes, and still desperately need to sign a proven receiver who can start. Even so, this could be a season-long problem spot.

Mitchell's presence as an H-Back could help him finally reach the Pro Bowl numbers his immense receiving talents suggest. Brady has excellent hands and the Jets will have an awesome one-two punch at tight end with talented Fred Baxter to back up the rookie.

RATING: 5

OFFENSIVE LINE

The line has gone from being a dependable unit to a huge question mark. Left guard Roger Duffy and right tackle Siupeli Malamala, likely to switch to right guard, are the lone returning starters. The Jets lost White, left tackle Jeff

Criswell and veteran starting center Jim Sweeney. In fairness, Cal Dixon split time with Sweeney last season and was ready to step in.

Left tackle James Brown and right tackle hopeful Matt Willig showed promise as emergency starters.

RATING: 6

DEFENSIVE LINE

The front four — ends Donald Evans and Marvin Washington and tackles Tony Casillas and ex-Giant Howard — is solid. But the Jets desperately need to improve their pass rush, which accounted for just 29 sacks last season, 17th in the league.

Lageman left town to anchor Jacksonville's defensive line, so rookie Hugh Douglas will have to make an impact as a situational rusher almost immediately. Douglas, a promising prospect from Central State (Ohio) despite his NAIA pedigree, was the Jets' second first-round selection, taken ahead of Luther Elliss with the pick acquired from Arizona in the trade for Moore.

Former Green Bay tackle Matt Brock and Alfred Oglesby add inside depth along with second-year man Lou Benfatti.

RATING: 6

LINEBACKERS

New defensive coordinator Jim Vechiarella wants to make the team's strongest area even more of an asset by rushing weak-side linebacker Mo Lewis, the team's best player. Lewis is a terror; you'll find his helmet somewhere in nearly every tackle. Plus, he led all NFL linebackers with four interceptions last year.

This is a crossroads year for oft-injured middle linebacker Marvin Jones, who needs to stay healthy and provide the kind of production worthy of the fourth player drafted overall in 1993. Though he was overshadowed by Lewis, Bobby Houston quietly developed into a force last season, finishing with a career-high 103 tackles. Houston played well in a Week 7 victory over New England, sacking Drew Bledsoe and holding tight end Ben Coates in check.

Veteran Kyle Clifton and backup Glenn Cadrez add solid depth.

RATING: 8

SECONDARY

Second-year left cornerback Aaron Glenn is the lone returning starter. Nickel-back Marcus Turner and backup safety Victor Green will battle for the starting right corner job.

Scott and Jones are big hitters capable of big plays, which will keep the Jets from missing Lott, even though his effectiveness was noticeably diminished last year. Still, it takes more than highlight-film hits to fill Lott's leadership role.

Glenn, Jones and Scott have big-time speed in an area that needed an infusion of youth. Without a pass rush to rattle opposing quarterbacks, their closing speed will come in handy.

RATING: 7

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	at Buffalo	Won, 23-3
Sept. 11	DENVER	Won, 25-22 (OT)
Sept. 18	at Miami	Lost, 28-14
Sept. 25	CHICAGO	Lost, 19-7
Oct. 2	at Cleveland	Lost, 27-7
Oct. 9	INDIANAPOLIS	Won, 16-6
Oct. 16	NEW ENGLAND	Won, 24-17
Oct. 30	at Indianapolis	Lost, 28-25
Nov. 6	BUFFALO	Won, 22-17
Nov. 13	at Green Bay	Lost, 17-10
Nov. 20	at Minnesota	Won, 31-21
Nov. 27	MIAMI	Lost, 28-24
Dec. 4	at New England	Lost, 24-13
Dec. 10	DETROIT	Lost, 18-7
Dec. 18	SAN DIEGO	Lost, 21-6
Dec. 24	at Houston	Lost, 24-10

SPECIAL TEAMS

Nick Lowery rocks steady at age 39. One of the most accurate kickers in NFL history, Lowery finished the 1994 season with 86 points on 20 of 23 field-goal attempts and 26 of 27 PATs. His 87 percent field-goal conversion rate in '94 was the fourth-best mark of his distinguished career.

Brian Hansen tied for seventh in the AFC in punting average (42.1) and fourth in net average (36.1). The 10-year veteran was dependable with 25 punts inside the 20.

The real addition to this group is Carter, who has game-breaking speed, a threat the Jets have lacked for years on kickoff and punt returns.

RATING: 7

DRAFT

Brady is a blue-chip tight end with Pro Bowl potential. He will get the chance to start immediately in Kotite's two tight-end formations. Kotite grabbed Douglas, who had 42 sacks in 32 college games and doesn't lack speed (4.7 for 40 yards) or confidence. He will wear No. 99, last worn by Mark Gastineau, and his personal credo has become "The Sack is Back."

Kotite traded up in the second round to draft Northwestern guard Matt O'Dwyer, who will be given every opportunity to win a starting job. Fourth-round selection Melvin Hayes and receiver Tyrone Dixon also have potential, but the sleeper may be Carl Greenwood, an excellent cover corner from UCLA taken in the fifth round.

RATING: 7

COACHING

Kotite comes to the Jets with a reputation as a winner despite adverse circumstances in Philadelphia. He's a no-nonsense disciplinarian whose teams play tough for 60 minutes, something the Jets have not done. The offense doesn't figure to be exciting, but if it can hold onto the ball and the defense can take it back, the Jets will be competitive.

RATING: 6

Jim Corbett covers the Jets for Gannett Suburban Newspapers.

AFC CENTRAL

PREDICTED ORDER OF FINISH

1. CLEVELAND BROWNS
2. PITTSBURGH STEELERS
3. CINCINNATI BENGALS
4. HOUSTON OILERS
5. JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

POWER RATING

- 76
74
60
59.5
59



Vinny Testaverde, Cleveland

JOE'S PLAYOFF PICKS

BROWNS: Bill Belichick wants his team to improve — which means win an AFC championship. Although they lost Eric Metcalf, they signed the most explosive offensive free agent — receiver Andre Rison. They failed to get Kyle Brady in the draft, but Belichick will find a way around it. Vinny Testaverde has finally put his critics to rest and now can relax and play for himself.

STEELERS: Bam Morris had a great year. Neil O'Donnell had a steelworkers-type year — he showed up, worked hard and got the job done. The question will be how the defense reacts without coordinator Dom Capers calling the shots.

FINAL '94 STANDINGS	OVERALL	DIV.	PF	PA
PITTSBURGH STEELERS	12-4	6-0	316	234
CLEVELAND BROWNS	11-5	4-2	340	204
CINCINNATI BENGALS	3-13	1-5	276	406
HOUSTON OILERS	2-14	1-5	226	352

PLAYOFF RESULTS

Wild Card Round

Cleveland 20, New England 13

AFC Divisional Semifinals

Pittsburgh 29, Cleveland 9

AFC Championship

San Diego 17, Pittsburgh 13



CLEVELAND BROWNS

'94 RECORD

12-6 (4-2 in Division, 1-1 in playoffs)

COACH

Bill Belichick, 5th season with Browns, 32-34

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1994 (Lost to Pittsburgh, 29-9, in AFC Divisional semifinals)

HOME STADIUM

Municipal Stadium, Cleveland, Ohio (78,512, grass)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Frank Stams, LB (Car.); Randy Baldwin, RB (Car.); James Jones, DT (Den.);

Free-agent signings: Andre Rison, WR (Atl.); Lorenzo White, RB (Hou.); Carl Banks, LB (re-signed); Mike Schaad, G (re-signed); Tim Goad, NT (N.E.); Johnny Thomas, DB (Wash.); Reginald Jones, CB (N.O.)

Others: Eric Metcalf, RB (traded to Atl.); Michael Dean Perry, DT (released; signed with Den.); Mark Carrier, WR (lost to Car. in expansion draft)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Ernie Adams (special assignments); Jim Bates (DBs); Chick Bresnahan (LBs); Jacob Burney (DL); Steve Crosby (off. coord./QB's); Kirk Ferentz (OL); Pat Hill (TEs/OL asst.); Scott O'Brien (special teams); Mike Sheppard (WRs); Jerry Simmons (strength); Rick Venturi (def. coord./LB)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	at New England, 1
Sept. 10	TAMPA BAY, 1
Sept. 17	at Houston, 1
Sept. 24	KANSAS CITY, 4
Oct. 2	BUFFALO, 9
Oct. 8	at Detroit, 4
Oct. 15	Open Date
Oct. 22	JACKSONVILLE, 1
Oct. 29	at Cincinnati, 1
Nov. 5	HOUSTON, 1
Nov. 13	at Pittsburgh, 9
Nov. 19	GREEN BAY, 1
Nov. 26	PITTSBURGH, 4
Dec. 3	at San Diego, 4
Dec. 9	at Minnesota, 12:30
Dec. 17	CINCINNATI, 1
Dec. 24	at Jacksonville, 1

All times Eastern

By MARY KAY CABOT

Cleveland Browns president Art Modell had finally heard enough bashing of the Browns' 1995 Draft and felt it was time to set the record straight. "I feel we're on the verge of a major breakthrough this year," he said, waving his hand through the air like a maestro. "Sooner or later, we're going to be in the Super Bowl, and I don't care who hammers us. We won 12 games last year and we're a better team than last year. We believe in ourselves."

Modell's pontification came a day after the Browns traded down from No. 10 to No. 30 in the draft, where they selected developmental line-backer Craig Powell, a junior from Ohio State. The draft-day downshift left Cleveland fans and media in an ornery mood. Where was that impact player the Browns promised to take when they traded away Eric Metcalf for the No. 10 pick?

Modell admitted he was disappointed the Browns failed to land huge Penn State tight end Kyle Brady in the first round; Brady was snatched unexpectedly by the Jets with the ninth pick, one before Cleveland was set to select him. But, Modell reminded irate Browns fans that he had already made the blockbuster transaction of the offseason by signing mega-star receiver Andre Rison, whom he calls "the best receiver in the NFL — bar none. And that includes Jerry Rice."

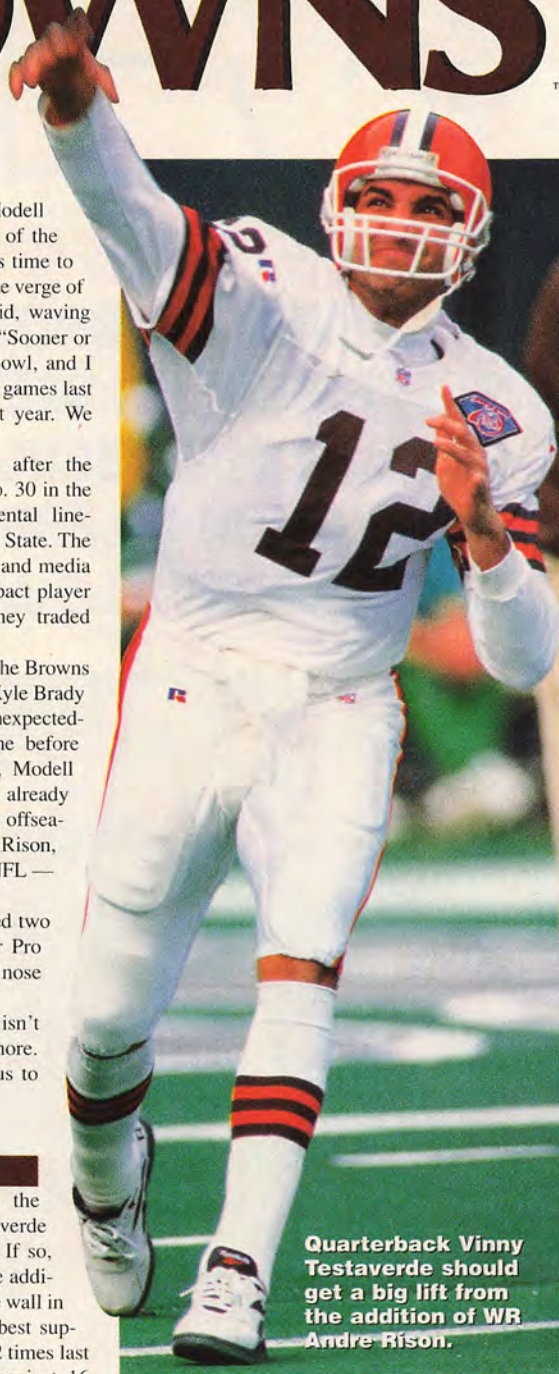
Two days after the draft, he introduced two more newly signed free agents, former Pro Bowl running back Lorenzo White and nose tackle Tim Goad.

"Don't forget," said Modell, "the draft isn't the only way to build your team anymore. We think these players will help take us to the next level."

QUARTERBACKS

While many fans seem to disagree, the Browns are still convinced Vinny Testaverde is the second coming of Otto Graham. If so, this will be his year to prove it. With the additions of Rison and White, and a Hog-like wall in front of him, Testaverde will have his best supporting cast ever. He was sacked only 12 times last year, but still threw 18 interceptions against 16 touchdowns and finished as the 11th-ranked passer in the AFC with a 70.7 rating (207 of 376 passing for 2,575 yards).

The Browns might take a big risk and not sign an experienced backup in 1995. They have fifth-year backup Brad Goebel, who has two career starts under his belt with Philadelphia, and No. 3 draft pick



Quarterback Vinny Testaverde should get a big lift from the addition of WR Andre Rison.

MILESTONES

- The Browns' next victory at the Stadium will be their 200th.
- Matt Stover needs 10 straight field goals to break the NFL record of 29, set by San Diego's John Carney in 1992-'93.
- The Browns have made the playoffs 23 times in their history, tied for the most ever with the Giants, who have been in the NFL 25 years longer.

POWER RATING
76

Eric Zeier of Georgia. Watch for fans to call for Zeier the minute Testaverde falters.

RATING: 7

RUNNING BACKS

White is expected to give Leroy Hoard a battle for the starting job in the Browns' one-back scheme. Together, they'll provide a formidable one-two punch. White was reinstated as Houston's starter midway through last season and averaged almost 90 yards a game thereafter. He's fumbled only three times in his last 699 touches and can do it all: Run, catch, block and pick up the blitz. Hoard became Cleveland's featured back last season after Metcalf lost his lead blocker, Tommy Vardell to a season-ending knee injury. Hoard rushed for 623 yards in the last seven games and scored nine touchdowns. Metcalf was eventually traded and Vardell is still rehabbing his surgically repaired knee but vows to return in 1995. Thirty-two-year-old Ernest Byner is getting up there in age but still is a reliable backup.

RATING: 8

RECEIVERS

Modell calls Rison, Michael Jackson and Derrick Alexander "the best trio we've had in my 34 years of ownership. It's not even close." Expect more three-receiver sets from this crew this fall. Rison (81 catches, 1,088 yards, eight TDs) has averaged 80 catches in his career, numbers that stack up with Rice and Sterling Sharpe. Jackson (21 catches, 304 yards, two TDs) was hampered by a pulled hamstring for much of last season but rebounded in the New England playoff win with seven catches for 122 yards. Rookie Alexander (48-828, two TDs) led the team in both receptions and yards.

RATING: 9

OFFENSIVE LINE

What was a weakness only a short time ago is quickly becoming a strength. All these guys need is a nickname to put themselves on the NFL map. Last year, despite two new starters, the line yielded a club-record and league-low 14 sacks.

Coach Bill Belichick considers left tackle Tony Jones the best pass blocker in the league and center Steve Everitt a Pro Bowl-caliber player. Right tackle Orlando Brown, is nicknamed "Zeus." Gene Williams and Mike Schad will battle it out at right guard.

The group still needs to improve its run-blocking, but Vinny can't say he didn't have time.

RATING: 8

DEFENSIVE LINE

Will the Browns recover from the loss of five-time Pro Bowler Michael Dean Perry, who was waived and signed with Denver? Goad should help fill the void, and tackle Bill Johnson is a penetrating force if he can stay healthy.

Pass-rushing end Dan Footman will be moved inside — but will the experiment work? Left end Rob Burnett (9.5 sacks) is one of the most under-

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
85	Derrick Alexander	WR	6-2/195	2	Michigan
70	Herman Arvie	T	6-4/305	3	Grambling
97	Romeo Brandon	DT	6-5/290	2	Oregon
58	Carl Banks	LB	6-4/235	12	Michigan St.
71	Mike Bedosky	G	6-4/290	2	Missouri
36	Isaac Booth	DB	6-3/190	2	California
77	Orlando Brown	OL	6-7/325	3	So. Carolina St.
90	Rob Burnett	DE	6-4/280	6	Syracuse
21	Ernest Byner	RB	5-10/215	12	East Carolina
56	Mike Caldwell	LB	6-2/235	3	Middle Tenn. St.
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91	Ronnie Dixon	DL	6-3/292	2	Cincinnati
61	Steve Everitt	C	6-5/290	3	Michigan
73	Dan Footman	DE	6-5/29-	3	Florida State
73	Tim Goad	NT	6-3/280	8	No. Carolina
8	Brad Goebel	QB	6-3/214	5	Baylor
28	Don Griffin	CB	6-0/176	10	Middle Tenn. St.
31	Stacey Hairston	QB	5-9/185	3	Ohio Northern
48	Frank Hartley	TE	6-2/268	2	Illinois
39	Frank Harvey	FB	6-0/245	2	Georgia
93	Travis Hill	LB	6-2/240	3	Nebraska
33	Leroy Hoard	RB	5-11/225	6	Michigan
81	Michael Jackson	WR	6-4/190	5	So. Mississippi
41	Tim Jacobs	CB	5-10/185	3	Delaware
96	Bill Johnson	DL	6-4/290	4	Michigan St.
68	Mario Johnson	DL	6-3/288	3	Missouri
52	Pepper Johnson	LB	6-3/248	10	Ohio State
24	Reginald Jones	DB	6-1/202	5	Memphis St.
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88	Brian Kinchen	TE	6-2/240	8	LSU
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95	Rick Lyle	DL	6-5/275	2	Missouri
87	Keenan McCardell	WR	6-1/175	4	UNLV
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27	Stevon Moore	S	5-11/210	7	Mississippi
67	Quenton Neujahr	OL	6-4/285	1	Kansas State
98	Anthony Pleasant	DE	6-5/280	6	Tennessee St.
22	Ricky Powers	RB	6-0/213	1	Michigan
86	Walter Reeves	TE	6-4/270	7	Auburn
42	Louis Riddick	S	6-2/215	4	Pittsburgh
80	Andre Rison	WR	6-1/188	7	Michigan St.
75	Pia Sagapolutele	DL	6-6/297	5	San Diego St.
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20	Johnny Thomas	CB	5-9/171	7	Baylor
37	Bennie Thompson	S	6-0/214	6	Grambling
7	Tom Tupa	P	6-4/230	7	Ohio State
29	Eric Turner	S	6-1/207	5	UCLA
44	Tommy Vardell	FB	6-2/230	4	Stanford
74	Larry Webster	DT	6-5/296	4	Maryland
62	Gene Williams	T/G	6-2/305	5	Iowa State
63	Wally Williams	C	6-2/300	3	Florida A&M

1995 DRAFT PICKS

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1	Craig Powell	LB	6-4/230	Ohio State
3A	Eric Zeier	QB	6-0/205	Georgia
3B	Mike Frederick	DE	6-6/278	Virginia
5A	Tau Papua	DL	6-5/275	Weber State
5B	Mike Miller	WR	5-6½/160	Notre Dame
7	A.C. Tellison	WR	6-4/212	Miami (Fla.)

BROWNS



RB Leroy Hoard will face a stiff challenge from Lorenzo White for his starting job.

rated in the business, and Anthony Pleasant is solid at right end. Up and coming '94 free-agent pick-up Rick Lyle will rotate on the outside. Huge third-round pick Mike Frederick, a fierce pass-rusher, might contribute some at end.

RATING: 7

LINEBACKERS

Pepper Johnson and Carl Banks have received a Mulligan in Cleveland. Johnson played like a kid last year and made a team-high 207 tackles. He became the inspirational leader of a defense that surrendered a league-low 204 points. Banks, who turns 33 in August, was great over the tight end but has lost a step in coverage. He's expected to split time with fourth-year backer Gerald Dixon.

Weakside linebacker Frank Stams was signed by Carolina, and No. 1 draft pick Powell is lightning quick but not ready to start. Front-runners for the job are the smallish Mike Caldwell, who must improve against the run, and unproven third-year player Travis Hill.

RATING: 7

SECONDARY

Belichick not only thought Eric Turner was the best safety in the NFL last season, but that he should have been a candidate for Defensive Player of the Year. Turner tied for the league lead with nine interceptions and made plays all over

1994 RESULTS	
Sept. 4 . . . at Cincinnati . . .	Won, 28-20
Sept. 11 . . . PITTSBURGH . . .	Lost, 17-10
Sept. 18 . . . ARIZONA . . .	Won, 32-0
Sept. 25 . . . at Indianapolis . . .	Won, 21-14
Oct. 2 . . . N.Y. JETS . . .	Won, 27-7
Oct. 13 . . . at Houston . . .	Won, 11-8
Oct. 23 . . . CINCINNATI . . .	Won, 37-13
Oct. 30 . . . at Denver . . .	Lost, 26-14
Nov. 6 . . . NEW ENGLAND . . .	Won, 13-6
Nov. 13 . . . at Philadelphia . . .	Won, 26-7
Nov. 20 . . . at Kansas City . . .	Lost, 20-13
Nov. 27 . . . HOUSTON . . .	Won, 34-10
Dec. 4 . . . N.Y. GIANTS . . .	Lost, 16-13
Dec. 10 . . . at Dallas . . .	Won, 19-14
Dec. 18 . . . at Pittsburgh . . .	Lost, 17-7
Dec. 24 . . . SEATTLE . . .	Won, 35-9
Jan. 1 . . . NEW ENGLAND . . .	Won, 20-13*
Jan. 7 . . . at Pittsburgh . . .	Lost, 29-9†
* - AFC Wild Card game	
† - AFC Semifinals	

the field. Hard-hitting strong safety Stevon Moore makes this duo outstanding.

Right cornerback Don Griffin was a big-play maker in '94 (four sacks, four fumble recoveries) but turned 31 this spring. He'll get a challenge from free-agent pick-up Reginald Jones, formerly of the Saints. Left corner Antonio Langham earned the starting job as a rookie a year ago and (continued on page 150)

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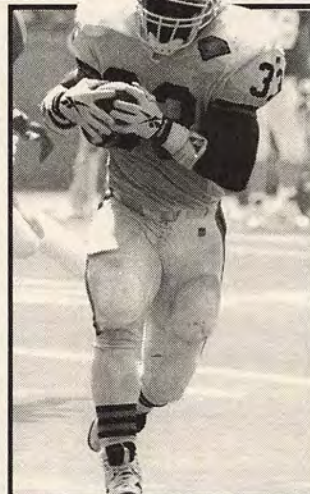
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PITTSBURGH Steelers

By JOE RUTTER

'94 RECORD

13-5 (6-0 in Division, 1-1 in playoffs)

COACH

Bill Cowher, 4th season with Steelers, 33-19

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1994 (Lost to San Diego, 17-13, in AFC Championship game)

HOME STADIUM

Three Rivers Stadium, Pittsburgh, Pa. (59,600, artificial)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Eric Green, TE (Mia.); Duval Love, G (Ariz.); Gerald Williams, NT (Car.); Gary Jones, S (NYJ)

Free-agent signings: Eric Pegrum, RB (Atl.); Rohn Stark, P (Ind.); Tom Newberry, G (St. L.); Chris Oldham, DB (Ariz.); Johnnie Barnes, WR (S.D.); Ed Toner, RB (Ind.)

Others: Fred Foggie, DB (selected by Car. in exp. draft); Tim McKyer, DB (selected by Car. in exp. draft); Charles Davenport, WR (selected by Jack. in exp. draft); Dom Capers, def. coord. (took head coaching job with Car.)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Bobby April (special teams), Ron Erhardt (off. coord.), Chan Gailey (WRs), Dick Hoak (RBs), Pat Hodgson (TEs), Dick LeBeau (def. coord.), Marvin Lewis (LBs), Tim Lewis (DBs), John Mitchell (DL), Kent Stephenson (OL).

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	DETROIT, 1
Sept. 10	at Houston, 1
Sept. 18	at Miami, 9
Sept. 24	MINNESOTA, 1
Oct. 1	SAN DIEGO, 4
Oct. 8	at Jacksonville, 1
Oct. 15	Open Date
Oct. 19	CINCINNATI, 8
Oct. 29	JACKSONVILLE, 1
Nov. 5	at Chicago, 4
Nov. 13	CLEVELAND, 9
Nov. 19	at Cincinnati, 1
Nov. 26	at Cleveland, 4
Dec. 3	HOUSTON, 1
Dec. 10	at Los Angeles, 4
Dec. 16	NEW ENGLAND, 12:30
Dec. 24	at Green Bay, 1
All times Eastern	

Three yards. That's the distance that separated the Pittsburgh Steelers from a Super Bowl date with the San Francisco 49ers.

When San Diego's Dennis Gibson batted down Neil O'Donnell's last-gasp fourth-down desperation pass at the goal line in the AFC Championship game, the Steelers were denied their first Super Bowl appearance since 1980.

Following that 17-13 loss at Three Rivers Stadium, coach Bill Cowher vowed to revitalize the Steelers and make another run at pro football's ultimate prize.

"It's like the electric razor. The red light was on. It's time to recharge the battery," Cowher said. "We're going to plug it in and the green light is going to come on. We'll be back."

But entering this year's training camp, it's hard to tell if the Steelers will move three yards forward or three yards back. Defensive coordinator Dom Capers joined the expansion Carolina Panthers as their head coach. The Steelers actively shopped moody running back Barry Foster before the draft. Kicker Gary Anderson became a free agent and threatened to sign elsewhere.

In addition, the team was shredded during free agency and made few noteworthy signings. Tight end Eric Green took his hulking frame to the Miami Dolphins. Guard Duval Love, one of the team's top offensive linemen, accepted the riches offered by the Arizona Cardinals. Veteran defensive lineman Gerald Williams and situational safety Gary Jones departed to the Panthers and New York Jets, respectively.

None of the Steelers' signings made the ESPN highlight reel. Guard Tom Newberry was signed away from the Rams, and punter Rohn Stark, who turns 36 before the start of the season, was wooed from the Indianapolis Colts.

The draft healed a big wound when the Steelers plucked University of Washington tight end Mark Bruener with the 27th overall pick. Colorado's Kordell Stewart was chosen second and figures to be the quarterback of the future.



Perennial Pro Bowler Rod Woodson will attempt to lead the Steelers to the Super Bowl for the first time since 1980.

MILESTONES

- On Nov. 5, the Steelers will try for their first win in Chicago. They are 0-11 in the Windy City.
- Neil O'Donnell needs only 208 yards to pass Bubby Brister (10,104 yards) and move into second place on the team's all-time passing yardage list behind Terry Bradshaw (27,989).
- With four sacks, Greg Lloyd will pass Dwight White (46 sacks) for fourth place on the team's all-time sack list.

POWER RATING

74

QUARTERBACKS

Fans have long considered O'Donnell the weak link in the Steelers' run-oriented offense, and he posted only modest numbers in 1994: 2,443 yards, 13 touchdowns, nine interceptions. But O'Donnell sparked some optimism by finishing the season strong and saving his best performances for the playoffs.

In two postseason games, he went 48-for-77 for 535 yards, three touchdowns and no interceptions. In a gut-check final series against the Chargers, he rallied the Steelers from their 17-yard line to the San Diego 3 before running out of downs.

For the third consecutive season, O'Donnell will be backed up by Mike Tomczak, who isn't flashy but readily accepts his No. 2 role.

When the Steelers grabbed Colorado's Stewart in the second round, it probably spelled the end of third-stringer Jim Miller's career after one season with the Steelers.

Stewart's Hail Mary touchdown pass against Michigan showed he has the arm strength to compete in the NFL. Getting the opportunity this season will depend on the health of O'Donnell and Tomczak. But keep on eye on Stewart down the road — both veteran quarterbacks' contracts expire after this season.

RATING: 6

RUNNING BACKS

The Steelers desperately tried to trade Foster before the draft but couldn't even secure a No. 2 pick. Then, shortly after the draft, they signed free agent Erric Pegram, a 1,185-yard rusher with the Falcons in 1993.

Stocky Bam Morris, a third-round pick in 1994, gained 836 yards and scored seven touchdowns for Pittsburgh as a rookie. His rise to prominence made Foster expendable.

The Steelers also return one of the best pass-catching fullbacks in the business in John L. Williams. In his inaugural season with the Steelers, Williams caught 51 passes for 378 yards and rushed for an additional 317 yards.

RATING: 8

RECEIVERS

With the loss of Green, the Steelers figure to be throwing downfield more this year. That's where the team's four young wide receivers come in.

Yancey Thigpen, Andre Hastings, Ernie Mills and 1994 No. 1 pick Charles Johnson aren't household names, but they complemented each other well in a rotating system. Johnson led all receivers with 38 catches in his rookie season. Thigpen caught 36 and emerged as O'Donnell's favorite target in the playoffs.

Replacing Green is Bruener, considered the second-best tight end in the draft. He caught 95 passes for 1,102 yards in four seasons at Washington.

RATING: 6

OFFENSIVE LINE

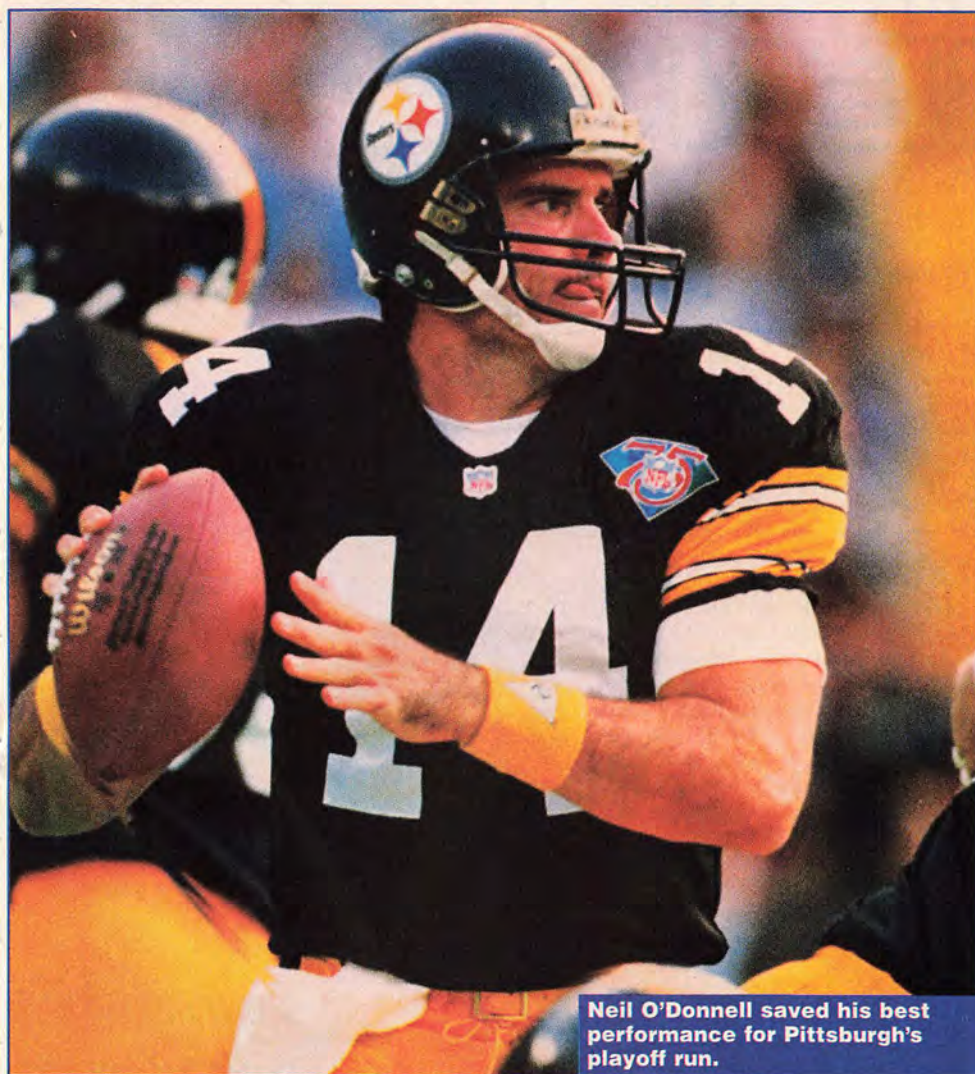
Considered one of the strengths in the ball-control offense, the Steelers will plug in Newberry to fill Love's vacated left guard position. Todd Kalis and Justin Strzelczyk will battle for

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
1	Gary Anderson	PK	5-11/179	14	Syracuse
43	Steve Avery	FB	6-2/233	2	Northern Michigan
80	Johnnie Barnes	WR	6-1/185	4	Hampton
40	Myron Bell	S	5-11/206	2	Michigan State
94	Chad Brown	LB	6-2/236	3	Colorado
96	Brentson Buckner	DE	6-2/305	2	Clemson
63	Dermontti Dawson	C	6-2/286	8	Kentucky
78	Taase Faumui	DL	6-3/278	2	Hawaii
21	Deon Figures	CB/PR	6-0/203	3	Colorado
29	Barry Foster	RB	5-10/218	6	Arkansas
92	Jason Gildon	LB	6-3/237	2	Oklahoma State
91	Kevin Greene	LB	6-3/247	11	Auburn
88	Andre Hastings	WR	6-0/190	3	Georgia
85	Jonathan Hayes	TE	6-5/248	11	Iowa
76	Kevin Henry	DE	6-4/270	3	Mississippi State
65	John Jackson	OT	6-6/297	8	Eastern Kentucky
81	Charles Johnson	WR	6-0/189	2	Colorado
62	Todd Kalis	G	6-6/296	8	Arizona State
87	Craig Keith	TE	6-3/264	3	Lenoir-Rhyne
99	Levon Kirkland	LB	6-1/252	4	Clemson
37	Carnell Lake	SS	6-1/210	7	UCLA
95	Greg Lloyd	LB	6-2/226	9	Ft. Valley State
56	Rico Mack	LB	6-4/242	3	Appalachian State
25	Fred McAfee	RB	5-10/193	5	Mississippi
16	Jim Miller	QB	6-2/226	2	Michigan State
89	Ernie Mills	WR	5-11/192	5	Florida
33	Byron "Bam" Morris	RB	6-0/235	2	Texas Tech
64	Thomas Newberry	G	6-2/285	10	Wisc.-LaCrosse
14	Neil O'Donnell	QB	6-3/230	6	Maryland
24	Chris Oldham	CB	5-9/183	4	Oregon
55	Jerry Olsavsky	LB	6-1/221	7	Pittsburgh
66	Siulagi Palelei	G	6-3/320	3	UNLV
39	Darren Perry	FS	5-11/196	4	Penn State
84	Walter Rasby	TE	6-3/247	2	Wake Forest
57	Eric Ravotti	LB	6-3/254	2	Penn State
51	Ed Robinson	LB	6-0/228	2	Florida
97	Ray Seals	DE	6-3/309	8	none
72	Leon Searcy	DE	6-3/304	4	Miami (Fla.)
67	Tim Simpson	G/C	6-2/284	2	Illinois
69	Ariel Solomon	C/G	6-5/290	5	Colorado
3	Rohn Stark	P	6-3/203	14	Florida State
93	Joel Steed	NT	6-2/295	4	Colorado
73	Justin Strzelczyk	G/OT	6-6/295	6	Maine
82	Yancey Thigpen	WR	6-1/208	4	Winston-Salem St.
48	Craig Thompson	TE	6-2/250	3	N.C. A&T
18	Mike Tomczak	QB	6-1/207	11	Ohio State
44	Ed Toner	FB	6-0/245	4	Boston College
22	John L. Williams	FB	5-11/231	10	Florida
27	Willie Williams	CB	5-9/185	3	Western Carolina
26	Rod Woodson	CB/KR	6-0/200	9	Purdue
90	Jeff Zgonina	DT	6-1/287	3	Purdue

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT/WT	SCHOOL
1	Mark Bruener	TE	6-4/250	Washington
2	Kordell Stewart	QB	6-1/121	Colorado
3	Brenden Stai	G	6-4/305	Nebraska
4a	Oliver Gibson	DT	6-2/283	Notre Dame
4b	Donta Jones	LB	6-2/226	Nebraska
5a	Lethon Flowers	DB	6-0/202	Georgia Tech
5b	Lance Brown	DB	6-0/200	Indiana
6	Barron Miles	DB	5-8/165	Nebraska
7	Henry Bailey	WR/KR	5-8/176	UNLV
7a	Cole Ford	K	6-2/195	USC



Neil O'Donnell saved his best performance for Pittsburgh's playoff run.

the other guard spot. Center Dermontti Dawson is a three-time Pro Bowl player. John Jackson and former first-round pick Leon Searcy are dependable tackles. Guard Brenden Stai, overshadowed by Zach Wiegert at Nebraska, was drafted in the third round.

RATING: 8

DEFENSIVE LINE

A mixture of youth and experience comprises this position. "Big Play" Ray Seals had seven sacks from his rush end position in his first year with the team. Second-year nose tackle Joel Steed is a rising star and 1994 No. 2 pick Brentson Buckner will replace Williams at the other end.

RATING: 7

LINEBACKERS

No team has a finer set of outside pass rushers than the Steelers with Greg Lloyd and Kevin Greene. Lloyd was named team MVP after recording 10 sacks and 91 tackles. Despite going sackless for the final five games (including playoffs), Greene led the NFL with 14 sacks.

Chad Brown and Levon Kirkland are underrated at the inside linebacker positions. They com-

bined for 219 tackles and 11.5 sacks in 1994.

RATING: 10

SECONDARY

The only upgrading the Steelers need to do at this position is finding replacements for Tim McKyer, who was burned for the game-winning touchdown against the Chargers, and Jones. Rod Woodson (four interceptions, 23 passes defended) didn't play to his all-world standards, but quarterbacks still are hesitant to throw his way. He made the Pro Bowl for the sixth consecutive year.

In his first season as a starter, corner Deon Figures was picked on frequently. Free agent Chris Oldham was signed away from the Cardinals and could be a nickel or dime back.

The Steelers thought enough of Carnell Lake to designate him their franchise player. The other safety, Darren Perry, always seems to be around the football. He led the team with seven interceptions last year. Lake and Perry, however, entered the summer without contracts for this season.

RATING: 8

SPECIAL TEAMS

The Steelers chose not to re-sign punter Mark

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4 . . . DALLAS	Lost, 26-9
Sept. 11 . . . at Cleveland	Won, 17-10
Sept. 18 . . . INDIANAPOLIS	Won, 31-21
Sept. 25 . . . at Seattle	Lost, 30-13
Oct. 3 . . . HOUSTON	Won, 30-14
Oct. 16 . . . CINCINNATI	Won, 14-10
Oct. 23 . . . at N.Y. Giants	Won, 10-6
Oct. 30 . . . at Arizona	Lost, 20-17 OT
Nov. 6 . . . at Houston	Won, 12-9 OT
Nov. 14 . . . BUFFALO	Won, 23-10
Nov. 20 . . . MIAMI	Won, 16-13 OT
Nov. 27 . . . at L.A. Raiders	Won, 21-3
Dec. 4 . . . at Cincinnati	Won, 38-15
Dec. 11 . . . PHILADELPHIA	Won, 14-3
Dec. 18 . . . CLEVELAND	Won, 17-7
Dec. 24 . . . at San Diego	Lost, 37-34
Jan. 8 . . . CLEVELAND	Won, 29-9†
Jan. 15 . . . SAN DIEGO	Lost, 17-13#

†- AFC Semifinal

#- AFC Championship game

Royals, despite the fact he placed a league-leading 35 kicks inside the 20. Stark, considered to have one of the league's strongest legs, was brought in as Royals' replacement after spending 13 years with the Colts.

The identity of Pittsburgh's placekicker is another matter. After 13 seasons, it appears Anderson's days are numbered. He became a free agent at the end of the 1994 season and negotiations were ongoing into late spring. The Steelers worked out several free agents and, for the first time since 1979, they used a draft pick on a kicker, taking Southern Cal's Cole Ford in the seventh round.

Woodson has expressed a desire to be relieved of his return duties, but he could return punts and kickoffs if all others fail. Johnson and Hastings saw action on the return teams last year.

RATING: 6

DRAFT

The selection of Bruener filled the biggest vacancy on the offense. Stewart is a project, who probably won't factor into this year's plans. Elsewhere, the Steelers raided Nebraska's national championship team for three players. They took Stai in the third round, linebacker Donta Jones in the fourth and cornerback Barron Miles in the sixth.

RATING: 7

COACHING

Cowher is a great motivator and a players' coach, but his 1-3 playoff record is cause for concern. Against the Chargers last January, he and offensive coordinator Ron Erhardt abandoned the ball-control offense at midgame, leaving many fans shaking their heads. But Cowher has a soft enough schedule that another trip to the postseason is a virtual lock. Having six games against the Bengals, Oilers and Jaguars won't hurt Cowher's .667 career regular-season winning percentage.

RATING: 8

Joe Rutter covers the Steelers for the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review.



CINCINNATI BENGALS

'94 RECORD

3-13 (1-5 in Division)

COACH

David Shula, 4th season with Bengals,
11-37

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1990 (Lost to Raiders, 20-10, in AFC semifinals)

HOME STADIUM

Riverfront Stadium, Cincinnati, Ohio
(60,389, artificial turf)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Derrick Fenner, RB (L.A.); Donald Hollas, QB (Det.)

Free-agent signings: Carl Pickens, WR (re-signed); Leonard Wheeler, DB (re-signed); Tim McGee, WR (re-signed); Eric Bienenmy, RB (S.D.); James Joseph, RB (Phi.); Tom Waddle, WR (Chi.)

Others: Steve Broussard, RB (released); Eric Ball, RB (selected by Car. in expansion draft); Santo Stevens, LB (selected by Car. in expansion draft); Louis Oliver, DB (released)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Paul Alexander (OL/TE), Jim Anderson (RB), Ken Anderson (QB), Bruce Coslet (off. coord.), Bobby DePaul (DL), John Garrett (off. asst./WR), Tim Krumrie (def. asst.), Ron Meeks (DB), Joe Pascale (LB), Larry Peccatiello (def. coord.), Joe Wessel (special teams), Kim Wood (strength)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3 at Indianapolis, 1
Sept. 10 JACKSONVILLE, 4
Sept. 17 at Seattle, 4
Sept. 24 HOUSTON, 4
Oct. 1 MIAMI, 1
Oct. 8 at Tampa Bay, 1
Oct. 15 Open Date
Oct. 19 at Pittsburgh, 8
Oct. 29 CLEVELAND, 1
Nov. 5 LOS ANGELES, 4
Nov. 12 at Houston, 1
Nov. 19 PITTSBURGH, 1
Nov. 26 at Jacksonville, 1
Dec. 3 at Green Bay, 1
Dec. 10 CHICAGO, 1
Dec. 17 at Cleveland, 1
Dec. 24 MINNESOTA, 1
All times Eastern

By JOHN DONOVAN

It was not so long ago — late January of 1989, to be exact — that the Cincinnati Bengals were on top of the football world, 34 seconds away from beating Joe Montana and the San Francisco 49ers in Super Bowl XXIII.

What a free-fall this has been.

Since their last playoff appearance in 1990, the Bengals have struggled just to go 14-50. They're coming off back-to-back 3-13 efforts, and last season, they would have finished a franchise-worst 2-14 if not for two field goals in the final three seconds of a meaningless season finale against Philadelphia.

But it's not just the losing that has made Cincinnatians restless. It's the way the Bengals have lost. The Bengals led the NFL in turnover ratio last season (minus 23). Their once-dominant offensive line, led by the likes of Anthony Munoz and Max Montoya, is in shambles. They've scored only eight rushing touchdowns in two seasons. They were the worst team in the league last year at converting on third down (31 percent).

"It's been a very painful process," David Shula said of his first three years as head coach. "But I believe we've bottomed out. We were on the edge last year, and now I think we've climbed out of the hole."

The optimism starts with rookie running back Ki-Jana Carter. General Manager Mike Brown traded up to the top spot in the NFL draft to get him, the first time in the team's 28-year draft history the Bengals have traded up in the first round. The speedy Penn State back will provide a running game to complement the team's already decent passing game, and the offense, which moved up to No. 18 last year, should get even better. The defense improved to No. 15 last season, thanks to youngsters like Dan "Big Daddy" Wilkinson, the No. 1 overall pick in '94, and Steve Tovar.

The real question surrounding the Bengals, though, is where they'll be after this season. The franchise has been swamped all offseason by talk of relocating; Baltimore and Los Angeles have been mentioned most often as possible new homes. But if the Bengals don't win soon, their fans may well start parking the Mayflower vans themselves.



Jeff Blake will battle David Klingler for the starting quarterback spot.

MILESTONES

❖ The Bengals haven't had a 100-yard rushing game from one of their backs in the past 33 regular-season games. The dubious club record is 44 straight games.

❖ Shula is unbeaten (2-0) in Seattle's Kingdome. The Bengals play there Sept. 17.

POWER RATING

60

QUARTERBACKS

Is Jeff Blake for real? Is David Klingler a real bust? For all the Bengals' problems last season, they did one thing better than any NFL team — throw the long ball. The Bengals had 12 plays of 50 yards or more, with Blake hurling nine of them.

Still, Brown is far from sold on Blake (44.6 percent, eight TDs, eight interceptions) and hasn't yet given up on Klingler, the No. 6 overall pick in the 1992 Draft. But Klingler (six TDs, nine interceptions in seven starts) had elbow surgery on Jan. 3, so there's a question if he will even challenge Blake.

Rookie John Walsh, a seventh-round pick, will be the third quarterback.

RATING: 6

RUNNING BACKS

Ki-Jana, in Swahili, means "Young Man." In Cincinnati, Ki-Jana simply will be "The Man."

The Bengals shocked the NFL by trading up to the top spot in the draft to get Carter, who averaged 7.8 yards a carry last year at Penn State. Carolina coach Dom Capers called him "Emmitt Smith with acceleration." Carter will get the majority of carries, but he'll be bolstered by an almost entirely new set of backs. Speedy scat-back Eric Bieniemy and pass-catching big back James Joseph were free-agent pick-ups before the Carter coup.

All that may spell trouble for the taciturn Harold Green, who has scored one rushing touchdown in the past two years. Jeff Cothran will challenge Joseph for the starting spot at fullback.

RATING: 8

RECEIVERS

The best part of the Bengals' offense is its wide receivers. That's why Brown hardly blinked to match Arizona's \$11-million offer to Carl Pickens, a move that will keep Pickens in stripes for four more years. Pickens was arguably the best receiver in the AFC over the final seven games of the season (781 yards, nine TDs). Pickens' counterpart is speedy Darnay Scott, a second-round steal last year who led the AFC in yards per catch (18.8).

Tom Waddle, a veritable Chicago icon for six years, comes home to Cincinnati as a free agent.

RATING: 8

OFFENSIVE LINE

The biggest worry on the line is right tackle. Joe Walter is penciled in as a possible starter, but he missed all of last year with a broken leg. If he's not able to go, veteran Bruce Kozerski could bounce back out there — he started 10 games at right tackle in '94, but the team would rather have him at right guard.

Steady Darrick Brilz will be back at center, with Dave Cadigan again manning the left guard position. Unproven Kevin Sargent is expected to anchor the line at left tackle.

Bengals quarterbacks were sacked 44 times last season, and unless the team gets some more help, they could again be scrambling for safety.

RATING: 4

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
15	Jim Ballard	QB	6-3/223	1	Mount Union
21	Eric Bieniemy	RB	5-7/198	5	Colorado
8	Jeff Blake	QB	6-0/202	4	East Carolina
74	Rich Braham	T	6-4/290	2	West Virginia
65	Darrick Brilz	G	6-3/287	9	Oregon State
43	Mike Brim	CB	6-0/192	8	Virginia Union
72	Scott Brumfield	T	6-8/320	3	BYU
68	Dave Cadigan	G	6-4/285	8	USC
92	John Copeland	DE	6-3/266	3	Alabama
46	Jeff Cothran	RB	6-1/249	2	Ohio State
5	Blair Culley	PK	6-1/190	R	Oklahoma
96	Mike Flores	DE	6-3/256	5	Louisville
50	James Francis	LB	6-5/252	6	Baylor
83	David Frisch	TE	6-7/260	3	Colorado St.
28	Harold Green	RB	6-2/222	6	South Carolina
45	Adrian Hardy	CB	5-11/194	3	NW Louisiana
19	Jeff Hill	WR	6-11/178	1	Purdue
55	Lamont Hollinquest	LB	6-3/245	3	USC
57	Kevin Jefferson	LB	6-2/232	2	Lehigh
11	Lee Jefferson	P/K	6-2/200	11	BYU
66	Dan Jones	T	6-7/298	3	Maine
25	Rod Jones	CB	6-0/185	10	SMU
24	Roger Jones	CB	5-9/175	5	Tennessee State
36	James Joseph	RB	6-2/222	5	Auburn
7	David Klingler	QB	6-2/205	4	Houston
64	Bruce Kozerski	G	6-4/287	12	Holy Cross
56	Ricardo McDonald	LB	6-2/235	4	Pittsburgh
85	Tim McGee	WR	5-10/183	10	Tennessee
82	Tony McGee	TE	6-3/246	3	Michigan
60	Eric Moore	G	6-5/290	8	Indiana
93	Ty Parten	DE	6-4/272	3	Arizona
9	Doug Pelfrey	PK	5-11/186	3	Kentucky
81	Carl Pickens	WR	6-2/206	4	Tennessee
76	Trent Pollard	T	6-4/304	2	E. Washington
89	Jeff Query	WR	6-0/165	7	Millikin
95	Keith Rucker	DT	6-4/340	4	Ohio Wesleyan
87	Troy Sadowski	TE	6-5/250	7	Georgia
77	Kevin Sargent	T	6-6/264	4	E. Washington
23	Corey Sawyer	CB	5-11/171	2	Florida State
86	Darnay Scott	WR	6-1/180	2	San Diego State
52	Steve Shine	LB	6-6/232	2	Northwestern
70	Artie Smith	DE	6-4/285	3	Louisiana Tech
79	Raymondo Stallings	DE	6-7/285	2	San Diego State
51	Steve Tovar	LB	6-3/244	3	Ohio State
59	Greg Truitt	LS	6-0/238	2	Penn State
67	Kimo Von Oelhoffen	DT	6-4/300	2	Boise State
84	Tom Waddle	WR	6-0/190	6	Boston College
27	Bracey Walker	S	5-10/200	2	No. Carolina
91	Brett Wallerstedt	LB	6-1/240	3	Arizona State
63	Joe Walter	T	6-7/292	11	Texas Tech
88	Derek Ware	TE	6-2/255	4	Central St. (Ohio)
37	Leonard Wheeler	CB	5-11/188	4	Troy State
4	Erik Wilhelm	QB	6-3/217	6	Oregon State
99	Dan Wilkinson	DT	6-5/313	2	Ohio State
94	Alfred Williams	DE	6-6/265	5	Colorado
31	Darryl Williams	S	6-0/191	4	Miami (Fla.)

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1	Ki-Jana Carter	RB	5-10/227	Penn State
3	Melvin Tuten	T	6-6/305	Syracuse
4	Sam Shade	S	6-1/191	Alabama
5	David Dunn	WR	6-3/210	Fresno State
6	Ryan Grigson	T	6-6/290	Purdue
7	John Walsh	QB	6-4/215	BYU



Dan "Big Daddy" Wilkinson announced his intentions of making the Pro Bowl this season, his second in the league.

DEFENSIVE LINE

Wilkinson was not the superstar everyone envisioned, but he was no bust. As a rookie, Big Daddy had 5½ sacks from his tackle spot, and he was durable enough to play every game. He's already vowed to make the Pro Bowl this season.

Veteran tackle Tim Krumrie has retired and moved into coaching the line, pushed out by 340-pounder Keith Rucker. John Copeland, who has yet to bloom since the Bengals picked him fifth in the 1992 Draft, is at left end.

RATING: 5

LINEBACKERS

If it weren't for Tovar, this would be one hurting group. He led the team with 122 tackles, recorded three sacks, forced three fumbles and had an interception. There's the mercurial James Fran-

cis on one side of Tovar, and Rico McDonald, who was returning from offseason knee surgery, on the other. Francis had 101 tackles and 4½ sacks, but his inconsistency — and his \$2 million-plus pricetag — are becoming increasingly annoying to the club. Then, there are a couple guys you've never heard of. Do Brett Wallerstedt, Lamont Hollinquest or Kevin Jefferson ring any bells?

RATING: 5

SECONDARY

Cornerback Corey Sawyer is the young hope here, but after that. . .

The starting corners last year were Mike Brim and Rod Jones. With Sawyer coming on, one of them may have to play backup. Which one is still a question. Strong safety Louis Oliver, the team's first big free-agent signing last season, was released

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4 . . .	CLEVELAND . . .	Lost, 28-20
Sept. 11 . . .	at San Diego . . .	Lost, 27-10
Sept. 18 . . .	NEW ENGLAND . .	Lost, 31-28
Sept. 25 . . .	at Houston	Lost, 20-13
Oct. 2 . . .	MIAMI	Lost, 23-7
Oct. 16 . . .	at Pittsburgh	Lost, 14-10
Oct. 23 . . .	at Cleveland	Lost, 37-13
Oct. 30 . . .	DALLAS	Lost, 23-20
Nov. 6 . . .	at Seattle	Won, 20-17 (OT)
Nov. 13 . . .	HOUSTON	Won, 34-31
Nov. 20 . . .	INDIANAPOLIS . . .	Lost, 17-13
Nov. 27 . . .	at Denver	Lost, 15-13
Dec. 4 . . .	PITTSBURGH	Lost, 38-15
Dec. 11 . . .	at N.Y. Giants . . .	Lost, 27-20
Dec. 18 . . .	at Arizona	Lost, 28-7
Dec. 24 . . .	PHILADELPHIA . . .	Won, 33-30

in early May. Free safety Darryl Williams, a first-round pick in 1992, did not have the big '94 season the team wanted, but he's still better than most.

RATING: 5

SPECIAL TEAMS

Homegrown placekicker Doug Pelfrey has a big leg and kicked the game-winners in all three of the Bengals' wins last season. He made 28 of his 33 field-goal tries.

Punter Lee Johnson, too, is still good at age 33. He averaged 43.8 yards a kick last season — second best in the AFC.

Those were the bright spots. The Bengals had one of the NFL's worst kick-coverage teams. Two kickoffs and two punts were returned for touchdowns last year.

RATING: 7

DRAFT

The Bengals included their second-round pick in the package to move up to get Carter. Fourth-rounder Sam Shade, a safety from Alabama, could replace Oliver. Fifth-rounder David Dunn, a wide receiver from Fresno State, could help out as a kickoff return man. And Walsh, no doubt, will hold a mean clipboard.

Carter alone, though, makes this draft a big positive.

RATING: 8

COACHING

The Bengals lost two of their more experienced assistants to the Carolina Panthers — receivers coach Richard Williamson and offensive line guru Jim McNally. The defense, too, went through a shakeup. All eyes, though, will be on Shula, especially early in the season. Shula's team started 0-10 in 1993, and 0-8 last season. A good start this year is imperative, or he could be looking for a job in October.

RATING: 4

John Donovan covers the Bengals for the Cincinnati Post.



HOUSTON OILERS™

'94 RECORD

2-14 (1-5 in Division)

COACH

Jeff Fisher, 2nd year with Oilers, 1-5

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1993 (Lost to Kansas City, 28-20, in AFC semifinals)

HOME STADIUM

Astrodome, Houston, Texas
(62,439, artificial)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Lorenzo White, RB (Cle.); Tim Roberts, DT (N.E.); Lamar Lathon, LB (Car.); Bill Schultz, G (Den.); Bo Orlando, S (S.D.); Bubba McDowell, S (Car.)

Free-agent signings: Chris Chandler, QB (St.L.); Mel Gray, KR/PR (Det.); Mark Stepnoski, C (Dall.)

Others: Ernest Givens, WR (released); Mike Munchak, DL (retired); Mike Teeter, DT (selected by Car. in exp. draft); Michael Davis, DB (selected by Jack. in exp. draft); Le'Shai Maston, LB (selected by Jack. in exp. draft)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Larry Beightol (OL); Dick Coury (offensive asst.); Rex Norris (DL); Rod Perry (DBs); Russ Purnell (special teams); Jerry Rhome (offensive coord.); Steve Sidwell (defensive coord.); Sherman Smith (RBs); Les Steckel (WRs/TEs); Steve Watterson (strength and cond.); Gregg Williams (LBs)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	at Jacksonville, 1
Sept. 10	PITTSBURGH, 1
Sept. 17	CLEVELAND, 1
Sept. 24	at Cincinnati, 4
Oct. 1	JACKSONVILLE, 4
Oct. 8	at Minnesota, 1
Oct. 15	Open Date
Oct. 22	at Chicago, 1
Oct. 29	TAMPA BAY, 4
Nov. 5	at Cleveland, 1
Nov. 12	CINCINNATI, 1
Nov. 19	at Kansas City, 8
Nov. 26	DENVER, 4
Dec. 3	at Pittsburgh, 1
Dec. 10	DETROIT, 1
Dec. 17	N.Y. JETS, 1
Dec. 24	at Buffalo, 1
All times Eastern	

By CAROLYN BRYANT

The Houston Oilers hit rock bottom at the close of the 1994 season, leaving many wondering what it might take for them to rise again.

A miracle, perhaps? The return of Warren Moon? How about Earl Campbell? Heck, when you're 2-14, you start looking for answers anywhere you can.

Minnesota might be a good place to start. Though the Oilers may never admit it, letting Moon go to the Vikings was far more costly than it would have been if they simply paid him to stay. The once-potent Oiler offense died and went with him. The Oilers went from AFC Central Division champs to NFL chumps, finishing in last place or close to it in just about every offensive category.

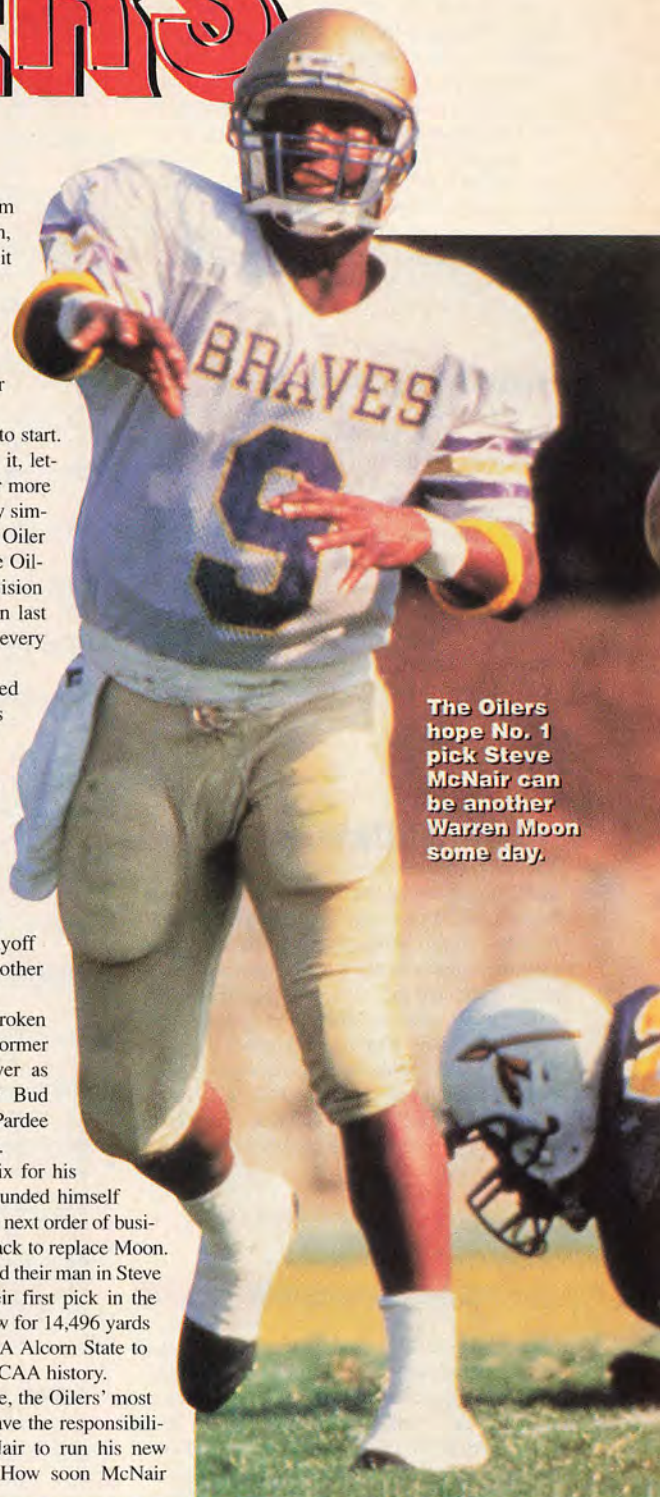
Last season, the Oilers averaged 280.1 yards per game — two spots from the league's lowest production — and scored a league-low 226 points. They found the end zone only 13 times, just barely missing last place, owned by Arizona and its 12 touchdowns. Posting one of their worst records in franchise history, the Oilers ended a streak of seven straight playoff appearances, a feat surpassed by no other NFL team.

Left to pick up the pieces of the broken team is head coach Jeff Fisher, the former defensive coordinator who took over as interim coach when team owner Bud Adams abruptly dismissed Jack Pardee with six games left in the '94 season.

While searching to find a quick fix for his struggling ballclub, Fisher, 37, surrounded himself with eight new assistant coaches. The next order of business was finding a bonafide quarterback to replace Moon.

Some say the Oilers may have found their man in Steve McNair, who they selected with their first pick in the draft. The highly touted McNair threw for 14,496 yards and 119 touchdowns at Division I-AA Alcorn State to become the most prolific passer in NCAA history.

Offensive coordinator Jerry Rhome, the Oilers' most notable coaching acquisition, will have the responsibility of grooming the unproven McNair to run his new offense (bye-bye, run and shoot). How soon McNair



The Oilers hope No. 1 pick Steve McNair can be another Warren Moon some day.

MILESTONES

- Unrestricted free agent Haywood Jeffires enters this season third on Houston's all-time reception list (454) and fifth in yards (5,345). The all-time leader in both categories is Ernest Givens (542 for 7,935 yards), who was released by the Oilers in May.
- Last year's record was Houston's worst since going 2-14 in 1983.

POWER RATING

59.5

becomes a starter will depend on how soon Rhome gets him ready. Meanwhile, the Oilers picked up Chris Chandler from the St. Louis Rams for security, should oft-injured starter Cody Carlson falter. The timing of McNair's development could jeopardize the status of both Carlson and third-stringer Bucky Richardson.

Solving the Oilers' defensive problems may be the hardest task yet for Fisher. Explanations run rampant as to how the same group of players slipped from first against the run to dead last. Could it be that former defensive coordinator Buddy Ryan was the catalyst? Well, Buddy is the head coach in Arizona now. Also gone are defensive end Lamar Lathon and safety Bubba McDowell, two key starters the Oilers will need to replace.

QUARTERBACKS

The big questions are: Who will be the starter and, more so, for how long? Teams don't draft quarterbacks in the first round unless they plan to use them soon. McNair, the third pick overall, will battle Carlson, Chandler and Richardson for the job. Chandler has the edge so far, because he is already familiar with Rhome's style from their days together at Arizona. Carlson spent most of his eight seasons on the bench, partly due to Moon and also to knee and shoulder injuries. His durability could be a problem, not to mention his fat contract worth \$2 million a year.

RATING: 5

RUNNING BACKS

The Oilers have switched running backs about as many times as they have quarterbacks. Fisher hopes Gary Brown can stay healthy now that backup Lorenzo White is in Cleveland. Brown gave the Oilers new life when he replaced White midway through the '93 season and rushed for 1,002 yards. But an ankle injury last year, capped by poor performances when he was healthy, helped White regain the starting role. Waiting in the wings are draftees Sean Jackson, a fourth-round pick in '94, and newcomer Rodney Thomas, selected this spring in the third round from Texas A&M.

RATING: 5

WIDE RECEIVERS

In a surprise move, the Oilers released Ernest Givens, their all-time leading receiver, to make room under the salary cap. Houston also failed to pick up the option on Haywood Jeffries' contract, enabling him to become an unrestricted free agent. Jeffries (68 catches, 783 yards, six TDs), however, is expected to re-sign with the Oilers.

The Oilers were said to be looking for taller, faster receivers, so holding on to Webster Slaughter (6-1) was at least one step in that direction. The Oilers landed both size and speed in rookie Chris Sanders, their fourth-round pick from Ohio State. Look for tight end Pat Carter to see more playing time along with rookie Michael Roan, now that the run and shoot is history.

RATING: 6.5

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
22	Tomur Barnes	CB	5-10/188	2	North Texas
56	Michael Barrow	LB	6-1/236	3	Miami (Fla.)
23	Blaine Bishop	S	5-9/197	3	Ball State
59	Joe Bowden	LB	5-11/230	4	Oklahoma
33	Gary Brown	RB	5-11/233	5	Penn State
89	Reggie Brown	WR	6-1/195	3	Alabama State
16	Rich Camarillo	P	5-11/202	15	Washington
14	Cody Carlson	QB	6-3/202	9	Baylor
85	Pat Carter	TE	6-4/258	8	Florida State
17	Chris Chandler	QB	6-4/225	8	Washington
79	Ray Childress	DT	6-6/272	11	Texas A&M
87	Pat Coleman	WR	5-7/176	5	Mississippi
90	Kenny Davidson	DE	6-5/288	6	LSU
3	Al Del Greco	K	5-10/200	12	Auburn
28	Cris Dishman	CB	6-0/188	8	Purdue
77	Kevin Donnalley	G/T	6-5/305	5	North Carolina
57	Brett Faryniarz	LB	6-3/230	7	San Diego State
55	John Flannery	G/C	6-3/304	5	Syracuse
92	Henry Ford	DE	6-3/284	2	Arkansas
21	Mel Gray	KR/WR	5-9/171	10	Purdue
51	Lemanski Hall	LB	6-0/229	1	Alabama
82	Travis Hannah	WR	5-7/161	3	USC
72	Brad Hopkins	T	6-3/306	3	Illinois
27	Sean Jackson	RB	6-1/222	1	Florida State
24	Steve Jackson	CB	5-8/182	5	Purdue
80	Haywood Jeffries	WR	6-2/201	9	N.C. State
29	Darryll Lewis	CB	5-9/183	5	Arizona
49	Roderick Lewis	TE	6-5/234	2	Arizona
40	Dennis Lundy	RB	5-9/190	R	Northwestern
74	Bruce Matthews	G/C	6-5/298	13	USC
48	Todd McNair	RB	6-1/202	7	Temple
35	John Henry Mills	RB/TE	6-0/222	3	Wake Forest
94	Glenn Montgomery	DT	6-0/282	7	Houston
64	Erik Norgard	G/C	6-1/282	7	Colorado
93	Jeremy Nunley	DE	6-5/278	2	Alabama
67	Jim Reid	T	6-6/306	1	Virginia
7	Bucky Richardson	QB	6-1/228	4	Texas A&M
31	Marcus Robertson	S	5-11/197	5	Iowa State
50	Eddie Robinson	LB	6-1/245	4	Alabama State
83	Malcolm Seabron	WR	6-0/194	2	Fresno St.
84	Webster Slaughter	WR	6-1/175	10	San Diego State
54	Al Smith	LB	6-1/244	9	Utah State
53	Mark Stepanoski	C	6-2/269	7	Pittsburgh
70	Stan Thomas	T	6-5/295	5	Texas
88	Gary Wellman	WR	5-9/173	4	USC
73	David Williams	T	6-5/292	7	Florida
10	Lee Williamson	QB	6-4/206	2	Presbyterian (SC)
52	Barron Wortham	LB	5-11/244	2	Texas-El Paso

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1	Steve McNair	QB	6-2/224	Alcorn State
2	Anthony Cook	DT/DE	6-3/293	South Carolina State
3a	Chris Sanders	WR	6-0/184	Ohio State
3b	Rodney Thomas	RB	5-10/213	Texas A&M
3c	Torey Hunter	CB	5-9/176	Washington State
4	Michael Roan	TE	6-3/251	Wisconsin
5	Gary Walker	DE/DT	6-2/285	Auburn
6	Hicham El-Mashtoub	C	6-2/288	Arizona
7	C.J. Richardson	S	5-10/209	Miami (Fla.)



Ray Childress was the Oilers' best pass-rushing threat in '94.

OFFENSIVE LINE

The line took a big hit when Mike Munchak announced his retirement after 13 years of service. It's hard to pinpoint whether it was old age, inexperience or players playing out of position that led to the Oilers allowing a league-high 65 sacks last season. The addition of All-Pro center Mark Stepnoski, the ex-Cowboy who decided to stay in Texas rather than accept a larger financial offer in Philadelphia, could put an end to the shuffling game, but it won't cure all of the problems.

Left tackle Brad Hopkins showed some, but not enough, improvement to make a new quarterback feel safe. Bruce Matthews, a seven-time Pro Bowler who is entering his 13th season, will move back to guard. Kevin Donnalley will be at the other guard, while franchise player David Williams will play right tackle.

RATING: 5

DEFENSIVE LINE

The defensive end spot could be the weakest point in the Oilers' "46" defense if they don't find someone to complement All-Pro tackle Ray Childress with the pass rush. They lost Lathon to the Panthers and are still waiting for last year's first-round selection, Henry Ford, and Jeremy Nunley to develop. Just in case they don't, the Oilers

used their second-round pick on Anthony Cook, who can play at tackle or could challenge free agent Kenny Davidson for the other end position.

RATING: 4

LINEBACKERS

No casualties at this position. All three starters return to the lineup, including Al Smith, who led the team with 142 tackles last year. Eddie Robinson is an emerging star, whose versatility allows him to play well against the run and the pass. Michael Barrow joins them at the other spot.

RATING: 6

SECONDARY

Had the Oilers not defended against the pass as well as they did (second in the league), they could have wound up at the bottom of yet another statistical category. The Oilers' ninth-place overall ranking was much to the credit of the secondary. All-Pro corner Cris Dishman is back, along with Darryll Lewis. They combined for nine interceptions last season. Safety Marcus Patterson, thought to be headed to Arizona, returns to keep the Oilers' pass coverage fairly sound. Strong safety Blaine Bishop played so well when he stepped in for injured

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	...at Indianapolis	...Lost, 45-21
Sept. 11	...at Dallas	...Lost, 20-17
Sept. 18	...BUFFALO	...Lost, 15-7
Sept. 25	...CINCINNATI	...Won, 20-13
Oct. 3	...at Pittsburgh	...Lost, 30-14
Oct. 13	...CLEVELAND	...Lost, 11-8
Oct. 24	...at Philadelphia	...Lost, 21-6
Oct. 30	...at L.A. Raiders	...Lost, 17-14
Nov. 6	...PITTSBURGH	...Lost, 12-9 (OT)
Nov. 13	...at Cincinnati	...Lost, 34-31
Nov. 21	...N.Y. GIANTS	...Lost, 13-10
Nov. 27	...at Cleveland	...Lost, 34-10
Dec. 4	...ARIZONA	...Lost, 30-12
Dec. 11	...SEATTLE	...Lost, 16-14
Dec. 18	...at Kansas City	...Lost, 31-9
Dec. 24	...N.Y. JETS	...Won, 24-10

starter McDowell that McDowell became expendable in the offseason.

RATING: 8

SPECIAL TEAMS

If the Oilers believe one player will make the difference, they've got a sure weapon in return specialist Mel Gray, who led the league in kick-off returns (28.4 yards per return), including three touchdowns. He also averaged 11.1 yards on punt returns. Gray, who turned 34 this spring, was a four-time Pro Bowl selection during his six seasons with Detroit.

RATING: 8

DRAFT

The Oilers toiled over the idea of whether to take a quarterback or a running back and whether it would be McNair or Penn State teammates Kerry Collins or Ki-Jana Carter. When Cincinnati drafted up and took Carter as its first pick, the Oilers made the wisest choice with McNair, the first quarterback taken in the draft and the first African-American quarterback to be selected in the first round since Tampa Bay made Doug Williams the 17th pick overall in 1977. The Oilers covered all of their potential needs, if not immediately, but certainly for the future.

RATING: 6

COACHING

Rhyme could be labeled a genius should he revive the Oilers' offense to a respectable level. Likewise, the success of his newest pupil, McNair, could make him the premier quarterback coach in the league. Special teams coach Russ Purnell is regarded as one of the best based on his years spent with Rusty Tillman in Seattle. Former longtime New Orleans Saints coach Steve Sidwell was Fisher's choice to assume his role as defensive coordinator.

RATING: 6

Carolyn Bryant is a free lance writer based in Houston.



JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

'94 RECORD

None

COACH

Tom Coughlin, 1st season with Jacksonville

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

None

HOME STADIUM

Gator Bowl, Jacksonville, Fla.
(73,000, grass)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent signings: Jeff Lageman, DE (NYJ); Dave Widell, G (Den.); Vinnie Clark, CB (N.O.); Don Davey, DE (G.B.); Bryan Barker, P (Phi.); Shawn Bouwens, G (Det.); Mike Dumas, S (Buff.); Kelvin Pritchett, DE (Det.); Joel Smeenge, LB (N.O.); Mickey Washington, CB (Wash.); Mike Williams, WR (Mia.)

Expansion draft: Steve Beuerlein, QB (Ariz.); Derek Brown, TE (NYG); Darren Carrington, CB (S.D.); Reggie Cobb, RB (G.B.); Keith Goganious, LB (Buff.); Desmond Howard, WR (Wash.); Kelvin Martin, WR (Sea.); Joel Smeenge, DE (N.O.)

Others: Mark Brunell, QB (trade with G.B.); Andre Ware, QB

ASSISTANT COACHES

Pete Carmichael (WRs); Randy Edsall (DBs); Kevin Gilbride (off. coord./QB); Jerald Ingram (RBs); Dick Jaaron (def. coord.); Nick Nicolau (TEs); Larry Pasquale (special teams); John Pease (DL); Lucious Selmon (OLBs); Steve Szabo (ILBs)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	HOUSTON, 1
Sept. 10	at Cincinnati, 4
Sept. 17	at N.Y. Jets, 4
Sept. 24	GREEN BAY, 8
Oct. 1	at Houston, 4
Oct. 8	PITTSBURGH, 1
Oct. 15	CHICAGO, 1
Oct. 22	at Cleveland, 1
Oct. 29	at Pittsburgh, 1
Nov. 5	Open Date
Nov. 12	SEATTLE, 1
Nov. 19	at Tampa Bay, 1
Nov. 26	CINCINNATI, 1
Dec. 3	at Denver, 4
Dec. 10	INDIANAPOLIS, 1
Dec. 17	at Detroit, 1
Dec. 24	CLEVELAND, 1
All times Eastern	

By PETE PRISCO

It's always three years. Or four. Or even five. For Jacksonville Jaguars coach Tom Coughlin, it's never now. Coughlin doesn't talk about the present. The future is all the former Boston College head coach cares about.

With a five-year contract and control of all personnel decisions for the expansion Jaguars, Coughlin has the rare luxury of being able to do just that. So what if he loses all 16 games in 1995?

Sure, it might eat at the tightly wound coach, but Coughlin's master plan spreads out over three years. Or longer. And with all the seats sold out on a season-ticket basis for at least three years, Coughlin need not worry about the product on the field just yet.

But Coughlin is a taskmaker in the Bill Parcells mold, and he will make sure there is improvement each week. He won't tolerate anything but that.

Some think this team can win as many as six games in 1995. Coughlin cringes at those suggestions. The numbers bear him out. No expansion team has ever totalled more than three wins in its debut season.

So in his mind, this year's win total doesn't matter. Talk to him in 1996 about wins and losses. The team did register one early win — in the expansion draft. The Jaguars selected 31 players, including a legitimate quarterback in Steve Beuerlein. Other big names followed: Former 1,000-yard runner Reggie Cobb, former Heisman Trophy winner Desmond Howard and wideout Kelvin Martin. In fact, former 49er coach Bill Walsh was so impressed by Jacksonville's picks that he said the Jaguars has as good or better an offense than four current NFL teams.

QUARTERBACKS

Bye-bye Buddy. Was any player more relieved to be rid of Buddy Ryan than Steve Beuerlein, who went from a 3,000-yard passer in 1993 to what Ryan called a "team cancer" in 1994? Ryan benched Beuerlein, then he spent the year taking verbal shots at the quarterback. Ryan's castoff, though, will be the Jaguars starter. Jacksonville took Beuerlein with the first pick in the expansion draft and was thrilled he was there. Under the tutoring of Kevin Gilbride (with no love



Quarterback Steve Beuerlein gives the Jags a solid starter — one hungry to prove his detractors wrong.

MILESTONES

- The two expansion teams will play in the Hall of Fame game in Canton, Ohio, July 29.
- QB Steve Beuerlein needs 10 passing yards to reach the 10,000-career-yard mark. 2,000 yards will place him among the Top 100 all-time.

POWER RATING

59

lost for Buddy), the Jaguars feel Beuerlein can revert to his 1993 form. The only change the Jaguars would welcome from that season is Beuerlein's generosity — he threw 17 interceptions to go along with 18 TD passes in '93.

The top backup will be Mark Brunell. A promising lefthander acquired from the Packers in a trade for two draft picks, Brunell is an athletic quarterback who could prove valuable if the Jaguars' offensive line struggles. Packers coach Mike Holmgren likens Brunell to Steve Young.

Andre Ware and rookie Rob Johnson of USC — a steal in the fourth round of the 1995 Draft — will round out the rest of the quarterbacks.

RATING: 6

RUNNING BACKS

James "Little Man" Stewart will make an immediate impact as a rookie. The team's second first-round pick in April, Stewart gives the Jaguars great versatility. He left Tennessee as the school's all-time leading rusher and is a decent receiver.

Reggie Cobb, another Volunteers' alumnus, will battle Stewart for the starting spot. If he can revert to his 1,000-yard form of 1992, the Jaguars should be solid at this position.

The fullbacks, who won't be asked to do a lot of running in this offense, should be Dexter McNabb and rookie Ryan Christopherson. McNabb, at 238 pounds, is a bruising blocker.

RATING: 6

RECEIVERS

There are big names at this position: Former Heisman winner Desmond Howard, tight end Derek Brown, reliable pro Kelvin Martin. But how many of those players are ready to step up and become big-play contributors? The Jaguars feel both Howard and Brown are poised for bust-out years. Howard came on late last season when he caught 40 passes for the Redskins. Brown, who was inactive for most of the 1994 season, will line up all over the field. Never a good blocker, Coughlin thinks Brown's ability to get deep will be a major factor in the team's offense.

Other receivers who could factor are Cedric Tillman, Jimmy Smith, Willie Jackson and rookie Curtis Marsh. Pete Carmichael joins Coughlin as the wide receiver coach after 30 years at various colleges (including three with Coughlin at Boston College).

RATING: 5

OFFENSIVE LINE

Through free agency and the draft, the Jaguars have put together a solid offensive line, but the rookie tackles must make a quick transition to the pro game. Those tackles — first-round pick Tony Boselli and second-round pick Brian DeMarco — should be immediate starters on the left and right side, respectively. Boselli was taken with the second overall pick in the '95 Draft, the highest an offensive lineman was chosen since Tony Mandarich. Boselli promises not to follow in Mandarich's disappointing footsteps: "We have absolutely nothing in common,"

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
83	Shannon Baker	WR	5-10/190	2	Florida State
4	Bryan Barker	P	6-1/187	6	Santa Clara
7	Steve Beuerlein	QB	6-3/210	8	Notre Dame
66	Shawn Bouwens	G	6-4/290	5	Nebraska Wesleyan
52	Brant Boyer	OLB	6-0/237	2	Arizona
36	Deral Boykin	SS	5-11/196	3	Louisville
86	Derek Brown	TE	6-6/260	4	Notre Dame
8	Mark Brunell	QB	6-1/208	3	Washington
29	Darren Carrington	FS	6-2/200	7	Northern Arizona
95	Jason Carthen	MLB	6-3/255	2	Ohio
69	Eugene Chung	G	6-4/295	4	Virginia Tech
59	Reggie Clark	OLB	6-2/225	2	North Carolina
27	Vinnie Clark	CB	6-0/192	5	Ohio State
34	Reggie Cobb	RB	6-0/215	6	Tennessee
24	Harry Colon	FS	6-0/203	5	Missouri
61	Chris Dausin	C	6-5/285	1	Texas A&M
89	Charles Davenport	WR	6-3/216	4	North Carolina St.
92	Don Davey	DT	6-4/270	5	Wisconsin
30	Michael Davis	CB	6-1/192	2	Cincinnati
78	Ivory Dillard	G/OT	6-3/299	1	Florida A&M
96	John Duff	DE	6-7/250	2	New Mexico
38	Mike Dumas	S	5-11/181	5	Indiana
97	Carlos Etheredge	TE	6-5/259	2	Miami (Fla.)
91	Paul Frase	DT	6-5/260	7	Syracuse
58	Reggie Freeman	OLB	6-2/233	2	Florida State
54	Keith Goganious	MLB	6-2/239	4	Penn State
26	Rogerick Green	CB	6-0/184	4	Kansas State
48	Rich Griffith	TE	6-5/252	2	Arizona
28	Monty Grow	SS	6-3/214	2	Florida
62	Ray Hall	DT	6-4/267	1	Washington State
6	Willie Harris	WR	6-2/196	1	Mississippi State
81	Desmond Howard	WR	5-9/180	4	Michigan
68	Greg Huntington	G	6-3/295	2	Penn State
47	Al Jackson	CB	6-0/182	2	Georgia
80	Willie Jackson	WR	6-1/205	2	Florida
23	Randy Jordan	RB	5-10/208	2	North Carolina
56	Jeff Lageman	DE	6-5/266	7	Virginia
93	Ernie Logan	DE	6-4/280	4	East Carolina
84	Kelvin Martin	WR	5-9/162	9	Boston College
45	Andy Mason	OLB	6-2/228	1	Washington
35	Le'Shai Maston	RB	6-1/232	3	Baylor
98	Cory Mayfield	DT	6-3/290	2	Oklahoma
57	Ryan McCoy	MLB	6-2/237	1	Houston
44	Tom McManus	MLB	6-2/240	1	Boston College
22	Dexter McNabb	FB	6-2/245	3	Florida
46	Vidal Mills	SS	5-11/190	1	Bethune-Cookman
50	Tom Myslinski	G	6-2/289	3	Tennessee
67	Jeff Novak	G/OT	6-5/295	2	Southwest Texas St.
94	Kelvin Pritchett	DT	6-2/281	5	Mississippi
39	Corey Raymond	CB	5-11/185	4	Louisiana State
43	Frank Robinson	CB	5-11/180	3	Boise State
31	Mazio Royster	RB	6-1/200	4	USC
74	Rickie Shaw	OT	6-5/305	2	North Carolina
76	Paul Siever	G	6-6/294	3	Penn State
37	Marcello Simmons	CB	6-1/180	2	Southern Methodist
9	Scott Sisson	K	6-0/197	2	Georgia Tech
99	Joel Smeenge	DE	6-5/250	6	Western Michigan
82	Jimmy Smith	WR	6-1/205	3	Jackson State
53	Santo Stephens	OLB	6-4/232	3	Temple
41	Dave Thomas	CB	6-2/205	3	Tennessee
87	Cedric Tillman	WR	6-2/204	4	Alcorn State
75	Mark Tucker	C	6-3/290	3	USC
11	Andre Ware	QB	6-2/225	5	Houston
25	Mickey Washington	CB	5-9/191	5	Texas A&M
79	Dave Widell	C/G	6-6/292	8	Boston College
90	James Williams	OLB	6-0/230	6	Mississippi State
51	Mark Williams	OLB	6-3/240	2	Ohio State
88	Mike Williams	WR	5-11/190	4	Northeastern
21	Marcus Wilson	RB	6-1/215	4	Virginia

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1a	Tony Boselli	OT	6-7/323	USC
1b	James Stewart	RB	6-1/222	Tennessee
2a	Brian DeMarco	OT	6-5/314	Michigan State
2b	Bryan Schwartz	MLB	6-3/256	Augustana (SD)
3	Chris Hudson	SS	5-9/195	Colorado
4a	Rob Johnson	QB	6-3/220	USC
4b	Mike Thompson	DT	6-3/276	Wisconsin
5	Ryan Christopherson	FB	5-11/238	Wyoming
6	Marcus Price	OT	6-5/303	Louisiana State
7	Curtis Marsh	WR	6-1/212	Utah



The Jaguars are hoping they landed their quarterback of the future by taking USC's Rob Johnson in the fourth round.

Boselli said in his draft day press conference, "except for the first name."

The interior three spots will be manned by veteran center Dave Widell and guards Shawn Bouwens and Eugene Chung. The top reserve will be Jeff Novak, who can play either guard or tackle.

RATING: 5

DEFENSIVE LINE

Defensive coordinator Dick Jauron likes to attack from his 4-3 defense, which made the defensive line a primary concern as Coughlin shopped the free agent market. The Jaguars came up with several players who will play a major role, specifically end Jeff Lageman and tackle Kelvin Pritchett, who both immediately legitimize the Jaguars' line. Lageman showed sack potential during his days with the Jets.

Tackle Don Davey and end Joel Smeenge should also start. Smeenge will likely move to end after playing linebacker the past three seasons for the Saints.

Under line coach John Pease, who like Smeenge was also with the Saints, Coughlin feels Smeenge will blossom into a pretty tough

pass rusher. Depth will be provided by end John Duff and tackle Paul Frase.

RATING: 6

LINEBACKERS

This is, by far, the weak spot of the defense. The middle linebacker in the 4-3 should be Keith Goganious, a good run-stopper who came over from Buffalo in the expansion draft. Goganious, though, needs improvement in his pass coverage.

On the outside, James Williams, who has started both inside and outside for the Saints, will be the weakside linebacker, and he has the potential to be a playmaker. The strong-side position is much more of a concern. Mark Williams, formerly of the Packers, will start there, but he must add weight to his 6-foot-3, 240-pound frame if he is to take on the tight ends.

Second-round pick Bryan Schwartz, a highly regarded prospect out of Division II Augustana (S.D.), may push Goganious on the inside.

RATING: 4

SECONDARY

Recognizing that the college draft was thin in this area, the Jaguars loaded up here through free agency and the expansion draft. The starting cornerbacks will be Mickey Washington and Vinnie Clark, both of whom were signed as unrestricted free agents. Clark is a big, physical corner, while Washington is a fierce competitor with a reputation for being a relentless worker. The safeties will be Harry Colon and Darren Carrington, the Super Bowl goat with the Chargers. Rookie Chris Hudson will push Colon at strong safety after making the switch from college corner.

There are several young players in reserve on the corner, including Dave Thomas, Michael Davis and Rogerick Green. Coughlin brought assistant coach Randy Edsall over from Boston College to help cultivate the green talent.

RATING: 6

SPECIAL TEAMS

By signing Bryan Barker as an unrestricted free agent, the team feels it has one of the better situational punters in the league. Barker, who comes over from the Eagles, has dropped 82 punts inside the 20 in his five years in the league, with only 35 touchbacks.

Scott Sisson, formerly of New England, will be Jacksonville's placekicker. His leg is not great, but Coughlin feels it will be good enough.

As for cover teams, expect some of the best, which makes perfect sense. Many of the players taken in the expansion draft were solid special-teams players. Had they been starters, few would have been left unprotected by their former teams.

RATING: 7

DRAFT

Entering their first draft with 14 picks, the Jaguars would have had to try hard to mess up. And they didn't. Coughlin moved up and down the board for two days — furiously swapping picks — and came away with 10 players. Three of them — Boselli, Stewart and DeMarco — will be starters from the outset and could be fixtures for a long time. Two others — Schwartz and Hudson — may start by the end of the season. In Johnson, the team may have its quarterback of the future. Marsh, a standout at Utah, is the sleeper of the group.

RATING: 8

COACHING

Coughlin has been given an amazing amount of power for a guy who has never been an NFL head coach. But he insists that's the way it has to be. As a coach, he is a strict disciplinarian who wants everything done his way. Hard work is rewarded. Slackers will be cut. How that plays in the NFL in the 1990s remains to be seen. But one thing's for certain: This is his team.

His coaching staff contains six coaches with ties to his Boston College days.

RATING: 6

Pete Prisco covers the Jaguars for the Florida Times-Union.

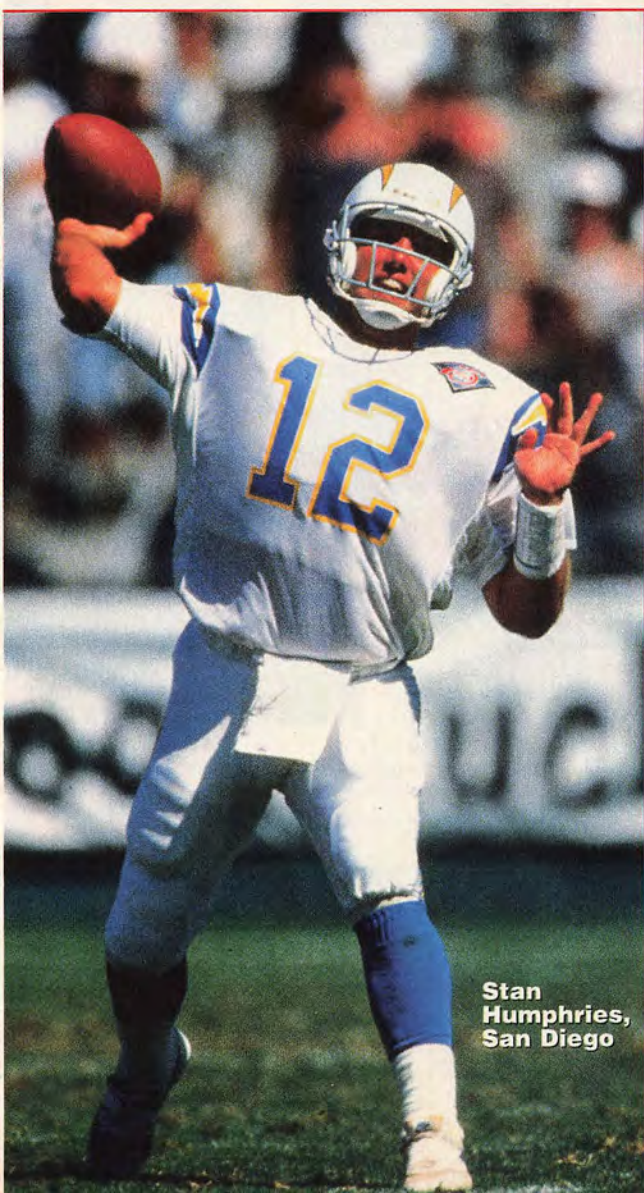
AFC WEST

PREDICTED ORDER OF FINISH

1. SAN DIEGO CHARGERS
2. LOS ANGELES RAIDERS
3. DENVER BRONCOS
4. KANSAS CITY CHIEFS
5. SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

POWER RATING

- 80
72
68
67
65



Stan
Humphries,
San Diego

JOE'S PLAYOFF PICKS

CHARGERS: The Chargers' Super Bowl appearance was no fluke. They have the size and speed on offense, and they will continue to be aggressive on defense. One key to their success is keeping Stan Humphries healthy. The Chargers can't afford to look over their shoulders at the Raiders—they have to look ahead.

RAIDERS: L.A. finally has a running game, but the big plus is what they've done on the coaching end. Losing Art Shell hurts, but they added quality assistants in Joe Bugel and Jim Fassel—two proven producers on the offensive side of the ball. It's still going to be Raider football that gets it done—speed, speed and more speed.

FINAL '94 STANDINGS	OVERALL	DIV.	PF	PA
SAN DIEGO CHARGERS	11-5	6-2	381	305
KANSAS CITY CHIEFS	9-7	4-4	319	298
LOS ANGELES RAIDERS	9-7	4-4	303	327
DENVER BRONCOS	7-9	4-4	347	396
SEATTLE SEAHAWKS	6-10	2-6	287	323

PLAYOFF RESULTS

Wild Card Round

Miami 27, Kansas City 17

AFC Divisional Semifinals

San Diego 22, Miami 21

AFC Championship

San Diego 17, Pittsburgh 13

Super Bowl XXIX

San Francisco 49, San Diego 26



SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

'94 RECORD

13-6 (6-2 in Division, 2-1 in playoffs)

COACH

Bobby Ross, 4th season with Chargers, 33-20

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1994 (Lost to 49ers, 49-26, in Super Bowl XXIX)

HOME STADIUM

Jack Murphy Stadium, San Diego, Calif.
(60,823, grass)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Eric Bieniemy, RB (Cin.); Stanley Richard, S (Wash.); Johnny Barnes, WR (Pitt.)

Free-agent signings: Shaun Gayle, S (Chi.); Bo Orlando, S (Hou.)

Others: Joe Milinichik, G (released); Darren Carrington, S (selected by Jacksonville in expansion draft); Curtis Whitley, C (selected by Carolina in expansion draft)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Dave Adolph (def. coord.); Greg Brown (DBs); Sylvester Croom (RBs); Frank Falks (TEs/H-backs); Ralph Friedgen (off. coord.); Stan Kwan (offense and special teams asst.); Dale Lindsey (LBs); Carl Mauck (OL); John Misciagna (quality control); Dennis Murphy (DL); Kevin O'Dea (def. asst.); Dwain Painter (QBs); Jerry Sullivan (WR)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	at Los Angeles, 4
Sept. 10	SEATTLE, 4
Sept. 17	at Philadelphia, 1
Sept. 24	DENVER, 4
Oct. 1	at Pittsburgh, 4
Oct. 9	at Kansas City, 9
Oct. 15	DALLAS, 4
Oct. 22	at Seattle, 4
Oct. 29	Open Date
Nov. 5	MIAMI, 8
Nov. 12	KANSAS CITY, 4
Nov. 19	at Denver, 4
Nov. 27	LOS ANGELES, 9
Dec. 3	CLEVELAND, 4
Dec. 9	ARIZONA, 4
Dec. 17	at Indianapolis, 4
Dec. 23	at N.Y. Giants, 12:30
All times Eastern	

By KEVIN KERNAN

When no one expects you to get to the top, life can be an easier climb. When expectations are high, however, the ascent becomes much more dramatic and steep.

That is the challenge facing the Chargers following their Bolt From the Blue season of 1994.

General Manager Bobby Beathard, who indeed may be the smartest man in pro football, is well versed about such things. "This year will be even harder for us," Beathard says. "We can't think we've reached another level so we don't have to push so hard. We're not that type of team."

Are the Chargers a fluke or fantastic? With 10 new starters in 1994, they raced to a 6-0 start and their first Super Bowl appearance before being wiped out by the 49ers, 49-26, in the Super Bowl. That loss left a bitter taste in their mouths. "The Super Bowl was the worst day of my life," running back Natrone Means said.

The biggest changes made this year were in the secondary, where there will be two new starters. Safeties Stanley Richard and Darren Carrington, who were torched by the 49ers, are gone, replaced by hard-hitting veterans Shaun Gayle and Bo Orlando. Rookie cornerback Terrance Shaw has been added as a nickel back and second-year safety Rodney Harrison will challenge Orlando. The rest of the team remains relatively intact.

QUARTERBACKS

Stan Humphries is a winner. He owns a 29-11 record as a starter with the Chargers. It's not always pretty, but Humphries finds a way to get the job done and is getting better every year. His 81.6 rating — 264 of 453 passing, 3,209 yards, 17 touchdowns and 10 interceptions — was the best of his career.

Humphries' strength is his toughness and the ability to connect on the long ball. Seven touchdown passes in the regular season and playoffs went 43 yards or longer, including a 99-yarder to Tony Martin. Humphries is completely recovered from offseason "Tommy John" surgery to rebuild his left (non-throwing) elbow. Cagey backup Gale Gilbert — who has been to five consecutive Super Bowls — underwent shoulder surgery and has more zip this season. Like Humphries, rookie Craig Whelihan from Pacific was a sixth-round pick and

The Chargers have the [Natrone] Means to make another run at the Super Bowl.

MILESTONES

- John Carney is third on the NFL's all-time list for field goal percentage. He has made 131 of 165 field-goal attempts for a .793 percentage. He trails only Nick Lowery 349-434 (.804) and Steve Christie 109-137 (.796).
- Stan Humphries moved ahead of Jack Kemp into third place on the Chargers' all-time passing list last season. Humphries has 8,546 yards, far behind John Hadl (26,938) and Dan Fouts (43,040).

POWER RATING
80

the Chargers' brain trust hopes he'll be something special down the road.

RATING: 8

RUNNING BACKS

Means is a heavy load at 245 pounds and is the linchpin to Bobby Ross' power offense. The Natrone Bomb set a single-season Chargers' rushing record with 1,350 yards and 12 touchdowns on 343 carries a year ago. He does show a tendency to tire, which is why Beathard went out and gave up next year's No. 1 pick to draft slashing runner Terrell Fletcher out of Wisconsin with the 51st pick.

Ronnie Harmon, who has caught the most passes (210) of any NFL running back the last three years, will be utilized more on first down this season, making the attack that much more dangerous.

RATING: 9

RECEIVERS

Once Anthony Miller departed for Denver, wide receiver became the weak link in 1994, so Beathard drafted Jimmy Oliver and his 4.19 speed out of TCU. Tony Martin, who said he could be as good as Jerry Rice last year, led the club in touchdowns (seven) and yards (885) on 50 catches and is coming into his own.

Mark Seay, who plays with a bullet lodged near his heart, has to hold on to the ball more but still wound up tied with Harmon for the club lead in receptions with 58.

Like Oliver and Martin, Shawn Jefferson has speed and finished 1994 with a career-high 43 catches for 627 yards and three touchdowns. Kick returner Andre Coleman is also a playmaker and has been added to the mix.

Look for this group to be much improved.

RATING: 7

OFFENSIVE LINE

This figures to be the strongest and most dedicated area of the team because center Courtney Hall played injured all season (torn biceps, damaged knee) and guard/tackle Eric Moten is attempting to make it back from a devastating knee injury and subsequent nerve damage to his right foot that knocked him out of the entire 1994 season.

Tackle Harry Swayne has all the physical tools but has yet to reach a level of consistency. Fellow tackle and 15-year veteran Stan Brock has discovered the fountain of youth in Jack Murphy Stadium's natural grass. Joe Cocozzo, Isaac Davis and Eric Jonassen give the Chargers a nucleus of young guards and tackles. Sixth-round draft choice Tony Berti — a tackle — could be a steal.

The Chargers were fourth offensively in rushing and sixth in passing in the AFC last year. Those numbers should be better with Moten's return.

RATING: 9

DEFENSIVE LINE

How much will Bill Arnsparger be missed? His defense was rated first in the AFC against the

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
25	Brian Allred	CB	5-10/180	2	Sacramento St.
4	Leo Araguz	P	6-0/185	2	Stephen F. Austin
2	Darren Bennett	P	6-5/235	2	None
67	Stan Brock	T	6-6/295	16	Colorado
58	Lewis Bush	OLB	6-2/245	3	Washington St.
3	John Carney	K	5-11/170	6	Notre Dame
44	Eric Castle	FS	6-3/212	3	Oregon
31	Willie Clark	CB	5-10/186	1	Notre Dame
68	Joe Cocozzo	G	6-4/300	3	Michigan
83	Andre Coleman	WR	5-9/165	1	Kansas State
22	Rodney Culver	RB	5-9/224	4	Notre Dame
73	Isaac Davis	G	6-3/320	1	Arkansas
93	Reuben Davis	DT	6-5/320	8	North Carolina
23	Shawn Gayle	SS	5-11/202	13	Ohio State
57	Dennis Gibson	ILB	6-2/240	9	Iowa State
13	Gale Gilbert	QB	6-3/209	10	California
21	Darrien Gordon	CB	5-11/182	3	Stanford
92	David Griggs	OLB	6-3/250	7	Virginia
53	Courtney Hall	C	6-2/281	7	Rice
33	Ronnie Harmon	RB	5-11/207	10	Iowa
28	Dwayne Harper	CB	5-11/175	8	So. Carolina St.
37	Rodney Harrison	S	6-0/201	1	W. Illinois
12	Stan Humphries	QB	6-3/223	7	NE Louisiana
80	Shawn Jefferson	WR	5-11/180	4	Central Florida
99	Raylee Johnson	DE/DT	6-3/265	2	Arkansas
74	Eric Jonassen	T	6-5/310	4	Bloomsburg (Pa.)
56	Darren Krein	LB	6-4/272	1	Miami (Fla.)
84	Aaron Lang	TE	6-3/264	1	New Mexico St.
98	Shawn Lee	DT	6-2/300	7	No. Alabama
81	Tony Martin	WR	6-0/181	6	Mesa (Colo.)
88	Deems May	TE	6-4/263	4	North Carolina
20	Natrone Means	RB	5-10/245	3	North Carolina
94	Chris Mims	DE	6-5/290	4	Tennessee
89	Shannon Mitchell	TE	6-2/245	1	Georgia
77	Eric Moten	G/T	6-2/306	5	Michigan State
91	Leslie O'Neal	DE	6-4/265	10	Oklahoma State
26	Bo Orlando	S	5-10/180	7	West Virginia
70	Vaughn Parker	T	6-3/296	1	UCLA
27	David Pool	CB	5-9/184	6	Carson-Newman
52	Basil Proctor	LB	6-3/243	2	West Virginia
86	Alfred Pupunu	TE	6-2/265	4	Weber State
55	Junior Seau	ILB	6-3/250	6	USC
82	Mark Seay	WR	6-0/175	3	Long Beach St.
65	Troy Sienkiewicz	T	6-4/300	1	New Mexico St.
72	Harry Swayne	T	6-5/295	9	Rutgers
75	Mark Vander Pool	T	6-7/303	6	Colorado
87	Duane Young	TE	6-1/270	5	Michigan State
59	Glen Young	LB	6-3/235	2	Syracuse

1995 DRAFT PICKS

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
2a	Terrance Shaw	CB	5-11/190	Stephen F. Austin
2b	Terrell Fletcher	RB	5-8/196	Wisconsin
2c	Jimmy Oliver	WR	5-10/173	TCU
3a	Don Sasa	DT	6-3/286	Washington State
3b	Preston Harrison	OLB	6-4/243	Ohio State
4a	Chris Cowart	LB	6-2/232	Florida State
4b	Aaron Hayden	RB	6-0/218	Tennessee
5	Omar Ellison	WR	6-1/200	Florida State
6a	Tray Sienkiewicz	T	6-4/300	New Mexico State
6b	Brandon Harrison	WR	5-10/181	Howard Payne
6c	Craig Whelihan	QB	6-5/204	Pacific
6d	Tony Berti	T	6-5/287	Colorado
7	Mark Montreuil	CB	6-2/200	Concordia (Quebec)



Defensive end Leslie O'Neal terrorized quarterbacks last year, netting 12½ QB sacks.

rush. Defensive ends Leslie O'Neal and Chris Mims combined for 23.5 sacks. Defensive tackle Shawn Lee (6.5 sacks) is underrated and monstrous Reuben Davis (6-foot-5, 320 pounds) clogs the middle to let Junior Seau wreak havoc. Young Raylee Johnson is a pass-rushing specialist and Mims will move to tackle on passing plays to supply a bigger rush.

RATING: 8

LINEBACKERS

Seau is completely healed from a pinched nerve in his shoulder that limited his effectiveness the final third of the season. Misdirection can still confuse the extremely active Seau, but he led the team with career-high 155 tackles and has been to the Pro Bowl four straight years. When he's healthy, Seau can be the most disruptive defensive force in the league.

Veterans David Griggs and Dennis Gibson are a step slow but make up for it with experience. Fourth-round pick Chris Cowart could be the steal of the draft if he bounces back from a knee injury that knocked him out of his senior

year at Florida State. Other than Seau, there are some holes here.

RATING: 7

SECONDARY

Without a doubt, the biggest weakness of the Chargers last season was its poor tackling in the secondary. Ross made it an offseason priority to add toughness. Gayle is a masher, but can he stay healthy at the age of 33? Can Harrison, a big-time hitter, learn the difference between the smart hit and the dumb one? The acquisition of free agent Orlando gives Harrison room to grow. Veteran cornerback Dwayne Harper slipped the second half of the season while Darrien Gordon got better.

RATING: 7

SPECIAL TEAMS

John Carney has become one of the most consistent kickers in the NFL and led the league in scoring with 135 points. Coleman was second in

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	...at Denver	...Won, 37-34
Sept. 11	...CINCINNATI	...Won, 27-10
Sept. 18	...at Seattle	...Won, 24-10
Sept. 25	...at L.A. Raiders	...Won, 26-24
Oct. 9	...KANSAS CITY	...Won, 20-6
Oct. 16	...at New Orleans	...Won, 36-22
Oct. 23	...DENVER	...Lost, 20-15
Oct. 30	...SEATTLE	...Won, 35-15
Nov. 6	...at Atlanta	...Lost, 10-9
Nov. 13	...at Kansas City	...Won, 14-13
Nov. 20	...at New England	...Lost, 23-17
Nov. 27	...L.A. RAMS	...Won, 31-17
Dec. 5	...L.A. RAIDERS	...Lost, 24-17
Dec. 11	...SAN FRANCISCO	...Lost, 38-15
Dec. 18	...at N.Y. Jets	...Won, 21-6
Dec. 24	...PITTSBURGH	...Won, 37-34
Jan. 8	...MIAMI	...Won, 22-21*
Jan. 15	...at Pittsburgh	...Won, 17-13†
Jan. 29	...San Francisco	...Lost, 49-26‡

*AFC semifinals
†AFC Championship game
‡Super Bowl

the AFC in kickoff returns with a 26.4 average, while "Flash" Gordon paced the AFC in punt returns with a 13.2 average.

Between them, they ran back five kicks and punts for touchdowns last season. Australian punter Darren Bennett will give the team an international flavor.

RATING: 8

DRAFT

Top draft pick Shaw is a vast improvement over Sean Vanhorse as the nickel back, and Fletcher adds depth at running back. Beathard gave up first-round picks to get both. Final second-round pick Oliver could be the best of the bunch at wide receiver.

In a typical Beathard draft, he grabbed one player, tackle Troy Sienkiewicz (New Mexico State), who hasn't played football in two years and another, cornerback Mark Montreuil, who didn't play in the United States. He's from Concordia College in Canada. A lot of big gambles, a lot of high ceilings.

RATING: 7

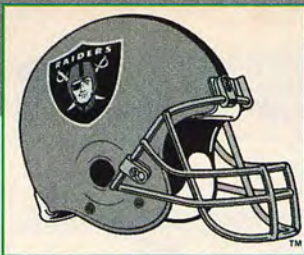
COACHING

In three seasons, Ross has been to the playoffs twice, including last year's Super Bowl run. A testimony of his success is the fact that three other AFC West coaches were fired last season. The Chargers will gamble more on defense under new coordinator Dave Adolph.

The success of the season depends on Humphries staying healthy and the revamped secondary coming together as a cohesive, hard-hitting unit. But Ross has proven to be the leader the Bolts hoped for.

RATING: 10

Kevin Kernan covers the Chargers for the San Diego Union-Tribune.



LOS ANGELES RAIDERS

'94 RECORD

9-7 (4-4 in Division)

COACH

Mike White (1st season)

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1993 (Lost to Buffalo, 29-23, in AFC semifinals)

HOME STADIUM

Memorial Coliseum, Los Angeles, Calif.
(68,000, grass)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Lionel Washington, CB (Denver); Donald Frank, DB (Minnesota); Alexander Wright, WR (St. Louis); Winston Moss, LB (Seattle)

Free-agent signings: Kerry Cash, TE (Indianapolis); Derrick Fenner, RB (Cincinnati)

Others: John Duff (picked by Jacksonville in expansion draft); Cary Brabham, DB (picked by Carolina in expansion draft)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Fred Biletnikoff (quality control); Willie Brown (dir. of squad develop.); Joe Bugel (OL/senior asst. coach); Jim Fassel (QB); John Fox (def. coord.); Bishop Harris (RB); Floyd Peters (DL); Steve Shafer (DB); Kevin Spencer (special teams); Fred Whittingham (LB); Mike Wilson (WR)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	SAN DIEGO, 4
Sept. 10	at Washington, 1
Sept. 17	at Kansas City, 1
Sept. 24	PHILADELPHIA, 4
Oct. 1	at N.Y. Jets, 8
Oct. 8	SEATTLE, 4
Oct. 16	at Denver, 9
Oct. 22	INDIANAPOLIS, 4
Oct. 29	OPEN DATE
Nov. 5	at Cincinnati, 4
Nov. 12	at N.Y. Giants, 1
Nov. 19	DALLAS, 4
Nov. 27	at San Diego, 9
Dec. 3	KANSAS CITY, 4
Dec. 10	PITTSBURGH, 4
Dec. 17	at Seattle, 8
Dec. 24	DENVER, 4

All times Eastern

BY LONNIE WHITE

Simple confusion. That's the best way to summarize the Raiders' offseason after last year's disappointing 9-7 record.

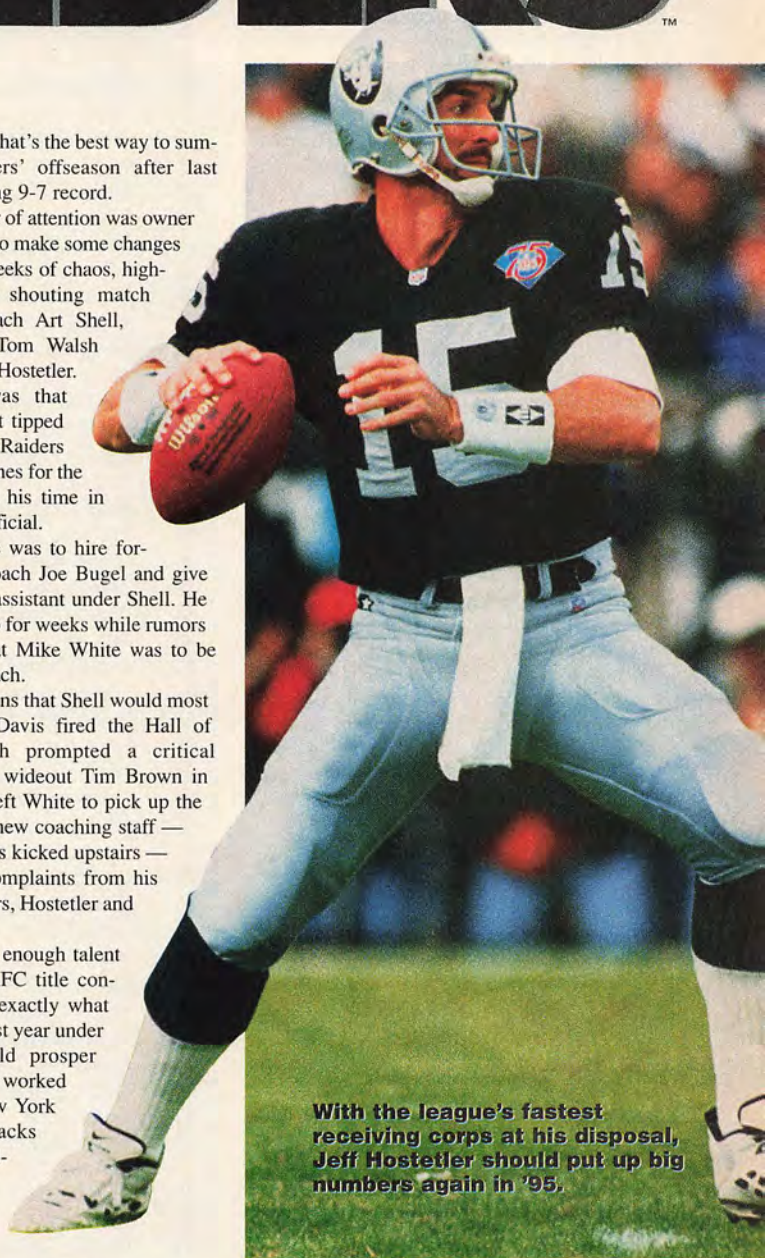
As usual, at the center of attention was owner Al Davis, who decided to make some changes after last season's 17 weeks of chaos, highlighted by a sideline shouting match between then-head coach Art Shell, offensive coordinator Tom Walsh and quarterback Jeff Hostetler. The only problem was that Davis, who still has not tipped his plans on where the Raiders will play their home games for the upcoming season, took his time in making his decisions official.

His first major move was to hire former Cardinals' head coach Joe Bugel and give him the title as senior assistant under Shell. He then kept Shell in limbo for weeks while rumors hit the NFL circuit that Mike White was to be named as new head coach.

After giving indications that Shell would most likely remain coach, Davis fired the Hall of Fame lineman, which prompted a critical response from All-Pro wideout Tim Brown in regard to Davis. That left White to pick up the pieces and assemble a new coaching staff — without Walsh, who was kicked upstairs — and smooth out any complaints from his top two offensive players, Hostetler and Brown.

On paper, White has enough talent to make the Raiders AFC title contenders. But, that was exactly what NFL experts thought last year under Shell. Hostetler should prosper with Jim Fassel (who worked with him with the New York Giants) as quarterbacks coach. Speedy and talented receivers in Rocket Ismail, James Jett, Daryl Hobbs and Brown will also help, along with running backs Harvey Williams, Calvin Jones and No. 1 pick Napoleon Kaufman.

Defensively, the Raiders have a strong mix of youth and experience headed by linemen Chester McGlockton, Anthony Smith and Jerry Ball, along with Pro Bowl cornerbacks Terry McDaniel and ex-Chief Albert Lewis.



With the league's fastest receiving corps at his disposal, Jeff Hostetler should put up big numbers again in '95.

MILESTONES

After consecutive seasons with receiving yardage totaling over 1,000 yards, Tim Brown could become the first Raider ever to do so in three straight seasons.

POWER RATING

72

RAIDERS

QUARTERBACKS

Hostetler may be on the downside of his career, but he is still capable of great things. Lack of protection took its toll on Hostetler last season, as he suffered with several critical mistakes, including a key interception in the Raiders' season-ending loss to Kansas City. Hostetler still completed 263 of 464 passes for 3,334 yards and 20 touchdowns, but his 16 interceptions cost the Raiders at some key moments.

Ageless wonder Vince Evans is 40 years old but is still a valuable backup. Evans appeared in nine games last season, completing 18 of 33 passes for 222 yards and two touchdowns.

The Raiders' problem is that their future is bleak at this position, with overrated and untested third-year pro Billy Joe Hobert waiting in reserve.

RATING: 7

RUNNING BACKS

Going into last season, this was the Raiders' weakest position. Not any more. Williams may not be a gamebreaker, but he is steady and can catch the ball out of the backfield. In rushing for 983 yards and catching 47 passes, Williams became the team's most versatile offensive threat by the end of last season and reminded fans of the way the Raiders once used Marcus Allen.

Kaufman may be the back Davis has been looking for since the retirement of Bo Jackson; he's a runner who can score from any position on the field. With Napoleon McCallum and Tom Rathman gone, the Raiders signed Derrick Fenner (468 yards) as a free agent from Cincinnati to play fullback.

RATING: 7

RECEIVERS

Brown has emerged among the league's elite wideouts with an All-Pro package of hands, speed and moves. Last season, Brown caught 89 passes for 1,309 yards and nine touchdowns. He and Hostetler combine for one of the most exciting passing tandems in the NFL.

White hopes to get Ismail and Jett involved more in the offense. Ismail caught 34 balls for 513 yards and five touchdowns, while the appropriately named Jett had 15 catches last season. If White can find ways for Hostetler to get the ball to the two burners, and if Hobbs gets more playing time, the Raiders' group of receivers will be lethal.

At tight end, Andrew Glover (33 catches) is a big target who can run but was underutilized last season. The addition of Kerry Cash from Indianapolis will add depth to the position.

RATING: 9

OFFENSIVE LINE

Left guard Steve Wisniewski was named to the Pro Bowl for the fifth time in his career but did not have a particularly impressive season. Center Don Mosebar was solid but is getting old, which is why the Raiders drafted Barret Robbins.

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
33	Anderson, Eddie	S	6-1/210	10	Fort Valley State
90	Baker, Jon	DT	6-7/280	1	Pittsburgh
93	Ball, Jerry	DT	6-1/315	9	SMU
24	Bates, Patrick	S	6-3/215	3	Texas A&M
49	Bender, Wes	RB	5-10/230	2	USC
54	Blekert, Greg	LB	6-2/240	3	Colorado
81	Brown, Tim	WR	6-0/195	8	Notre Dame
56	Bruce, Aundray	DE	6-5/260	8	Auburn
	Cash, Kerry	TE	6-4/245	5	Texas
70	Davis, Scott	DE	6-7/285	6	Illinois
11	Evans, Vince	QB	6-2/215	16	USC
	Fenner, Derrick	RB	6-3/230	7	North Carolina
55	Folston, James	LB	6-3/235	2	NE Louisiana
53	Fredrickson, Rob	LB	6-4/240	2	Michigan State
87	Glover, Andrew	TE	6-6/245	5	Grambling
66	Gogan, Kevin	G	6-7/320	9	Washington
7	Gossett, Jeff	P	6-2/190	14	Eastern Illinois
74	Harrison, Nolan	DE	6-5/285	5	Indiana
80	Hobbs, Daryl	WR	6-2/175	3	Pacific
12	Hobert, Billy Joe	QB	6-3/225	3	Washington
57	Holmberg, Rob	LB	6-3/230	2	Penn State
20	Hoskins, Derrick	S	6-2/200	4	S. Mississippi
15	Hostetler, Jeff	QB	6-3/215	12	West Virginia
86	Ismail, Raghib	WR	5-11/175	3	Notre Dame
18	Jaeger, Jeff	K	5-11/190	9	Washington
64	Jenkins, Robert	T	6-5/295	10	UCLA
82	Jett, James	WR	5-10/165	3	West Virginia
27	Jones, Calvin	RB	5-11/205	2	Nebraska
84	Jones, Hassan	WR	6-0/200	9	Florida State
52	Jones, Mike	LB	6-1/230	5	Missouri
25	Land, Dan	S	6-0/195	8	Albany State
29	Lewis, Albert	CB	6-2/195	13	Grambling
36	McDaniel, Terry	CB	5-10/180	8	Tennessee
91	McGlockton, Chester	DT	6-4/310	4	Clemson
21	Montgomery, Tyrone	WR	6-0/190	3	Mississippi
72	Mosebar, Don	C	6-6/295	13	USC
48	Mustafaa, Najee	CB	6-1/190	8	Georgia Tech
71	Perry, Gerald	T	6-6/290	8	Southern
39	Pickens, Bruce	CB	5-11/190	4	Nebraska
44	Rathman, Tom	RB	6-1/230	10	Nebraska
95	Robbins, Austin	DT	6-6/290	2	North Carolina
28	Robinson, Greg	RB	5-10/205	3	NE Louisiana
78	Skrepenak, Greg	T	6-6/310	3	Michigan
94	Smith, Anthony	DE	6-3/265	6	Arizona
83	Smith, Kevin	TE	6-4/255	3	UCLA
77	Stephens, Rich	T	6-7/310	3	Tulsa
	Swilling, Pat	DE	6-3/245	10	Georgia Tech
37	Trapp, James	CB	6-0/180	3	Clemson
67	Turk, Dan	C	6-4/290	11	Wisconsin
51	Wallace, Aaron	DE	6-3/245	6	Texas A&M
96	White, Alberto	DE	6-3/245	2	Texas Southern
68	Wilkerson, Bruce	T	6-5/295	9	Tennessee
22	Williams, Harvey	RB	6-2/215	5	Louisiana State
88	Williams, Jamie	TE	6-4/250	13	Nebraska
76	Wisniewski, Steve	G	6-4/285	7	Penn State

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1	Napoleon Kaufman	RB	5-9/185	Washington
2	Barret Robbins	C	6-3/310	TCU
3	Joe Aska	RB	5-11/230	Central Oklahoma
4	Mike Morton	LB	6-4/230	No. Carolina
5a	Matt Dyson	LB	6-3/275	Michigan
5b	Jeff Kysar	OT	6-7/320	Arizona State
6	Eli Herring	OT	6-8/335	BYU



Raghib "Rocket" Ismail figures to be more active in '95 after grabbing 34 balls for 513 yards in '94

bins out of Texas Christian in the second round. Right guard Kevin Gogan was solid, as was left tackle Gerald Perry, but both had their share of problems last season. Greg Skrepenak and Robert Jenkins are average sharing the right tackle position.

With age, injury and inconsistency to contend with, the offensive tackle position was addressed by Davis in the latter rounds of the NFL draft—in typical Davis style, one of the picks is a huge gamble. The Raiders selected a pair of condo-sized tackles in 6-foot-7, 320-pound Jeff Kysar (Arizona State) in the fifth round and 6-8, 335-pound Eli Herring (BYU) in the sixth round. Herring's stock dropped when he announced prior to the draft that he would not play on Sundays due to religious reasons. Davis will try to convince him otherwise.

RATING: 6

DEFENSIVE LINE

Pat Sullivan was signed as a free agent from Detroit and will be used as a defensive rush end. If he is able to make the switch from linebacker, Sullivan's presence should free Smith to pick up his sack total (he had six last season after recording 12.5 in 1993) on the other side, along with underrated sack specialist Alberto White. The combination of McGlockton (9.5 sacks), Ball (three sacks) and Nolan Harrison

(five sacks) may be the best interior group in the AFC.

RATING: 9

LINEBACKERS

Winston Moss' leadership at outside linebacker will be missed, as he signed with Seattle as a free agent, but the Raiders think second-year pro Rob Fredrickson can be a star in the league. Steady Mike Jones is a solid pass coverage specialist. James Folston and Rob Holmberg will get an opportunity to take over for Moss, while Greg Biekert starts in the middle.

Not much experience or depth here, but there is potential.

RATING: 5

SECONDARY

Veteran cornerback Lionel Washington has left for Denver via free agency, but the Raiders still have two of the game's best defensive backs in McDaniel (seven interceptions last season) and Lewis, who is also dangerous on special teams as a fearless kick-blocker.

James Trapp came on strong at the end of last season, and free-agent pickup Najee Mustafa will help in nickel coverages. Patrick Bates and Derrick Hoskins could open the season as start-

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 5	...at San Francisco	Lost, 44-14
Sept. 11	...SEATTLE	Lost, 38-9
Sept. 18	...at Denver	Won, 48-16
Sept. 25	...SAN DIEGO	Lost, 26-24
Oct. 9	...at New England	Won, 21-17
Oct. 16	...at Miami (OT)	Lost, 20-17
Oct. 23	...ATLANTA	Won, 30-17
Oct. 30	...HOUSTON	Won, 17-14
Nov. 6	...at Kansas City	Lost, 13-3
Nov. 13	...at L.A. Rams	Won, 20-17
Nov. 20	...NEW ORLEANS	Won, 24-19
Nov. 27	...PITTSBURGH	Lost, 21-3
Dec. 5	...at San Diego	Won, 24-17
Dec. 11	...DENVER	Won, 23-13
Dec. 18	...at Seattle	Won, 17-16
Dec. 24	...KANSAS CITY	Lost, 19-9

ing safeties, with veteran Eddie Anderson finally stepping aside to give the secondary more coverage ability.

RATING: 7

SPECIAL TEAMS

With Brown returning punts and Jeff Jaeger and Jeff Gossett handling the kicking duties, the Raiders have Pro Bowlers controlling most facets of their special teams. Brown was second in the AFC in punt returns, averaging 12.2 yards per return. Jaeger was a perfect 31-for-31 on extra points and 22-for-28 on field goals, and Gossett led the AFC in punting (43.9 ypp), including 19 boots inside the 20. If Ismail and Kaufman can improve the kickoff return unit, the Raiders will be exciting to watch in any kicking situation.

RATING: 9

DRAFT

Kaufman (5-9, 185) is too small to be a 25-carry back, but he could be a sleeper with his speed and big-play ability. Robbins was a good choice, but Joe Aska, a running back out of Central Oklahoma, may be lost in the shuffle with the return of former injured starters Greg Robinson and Tyrone Montgomery to the backfield. Mike Norton of North Carolina and Matt Dyson of Michigan both could play at linebacker. Kysar and Herring are both projects for the offensive line.

RATING: 6

COACHING

Shell may have taken a bad rap for last season's collapse, but, overall, White has a better staff to work with this season. Proven assistants will help on both sides of the line, especially old pros such as Floyd Peters (defensive line) and Bugel (offensive line). Special teams coach Kevin Spencer is another nice addition.

RATING: 8

Lonnie White covers the Raiders for the Los Angeles Times.



DENVER BRONCOS

'94 RECORD

7-9 (4-4 in Division)

COACH

Mike Shanahan, 1st season with Broncos; 8-12 overall

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1993 (Lost to Raiders, 42-24, in AFC wild-card Game)

HOME STADIUM

Mile High Stadium, Denver, Colo.
(76,273, grass)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Mike Croel, LB (NYG); Richard Harvey, LB (N.O.); Kirk Scraftford, T (S.F.); Ted Washington, NT (Buff.); Dave Widell, G (Jack.)

Free-agent signings: Tyrone Braxton, CB (Miami); Aaron Craver, RB (Mia.); Britt Hager, LB (Phi.); Tim Hauck, S (G.B.); James Jones, DT (Cle.); Mike Lodish, NT (Buff.); Ed McCaffrey, WR (S.F.); Bill Musgrave, QB (S.F.); Michael Dean Perry, DT (Cle.); Mark Schlereth, G (Wash.); Bill Schultz, G (Hou.); Eric Thomas, CB (NYJ); Lionel Washington, CB (L.A.)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Frank Bush (LBs); Barney Chavous (def. asst.); Ed Donatelli (DBs); George Dyer (DL); Alex Gibbs (OL); Mike Heimerdinger (WRs); Gary Kubiak (off. coord., QBs); Brian Pariani (TEs); Alvin Reynolds (def. asst.); Greg Robinson (def. coord.); Richard Smith (special teams); Bobby Turner (RBs)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	.....	BUFFALO, 8
Sept. 10	.....	at Dallas, 4
Sept. 17	.....	WASHINGTON, 4
Sept. 24	.....	at San Diego, 4
Oct. 1	.....	at Seattle, 4
Oct. 8	.....	at New England, 8
Oct. 16	.....	LOS ANGELES, 9
Oct. 22	.....	KANSAS CITY, 4
Oct. 29	.....	Open Date
Nov. 5	.....	ARIZONA, 4
Nov. 12	.....	at Philadelphia, 8
Nov. 19	.....	SAN DIEGO, 4
Nov. 26	.....	at Houston, 4
Dec. 3	.....	JACKSONVILLE, 4
Dec. 10	.....	SEATTLE, 4
Dec. 17	.....	at Kansas City, 4
Dec. 24	.....	at Los Angeles, 4
All times Eastern		

By RICK MORRISSEY

After two seasons of mediocre play, owner Pat Bowlen fired Wade Phillips and hired Mike Shanahan. The change had its price, however. Bowlen gave his new coach lots of money (\$8.5 million) and lots of security (a seven-year contract). It was both a mea culpa for not doing what needed to be done two years ago to lure Shanahan away from the 49ers and also a commitment to do whatever it takes to get a Super Bowl title while John Elway is still near the top of his game.

There was little doubt at the end of January that Shanahan was at the top of Bowlen's list. Shanahan's game plan as San Francisco's offensive coordinator was one of the reasons the 49ers smoked San Diego in Super Bowl XXIX. The biggest question, of course, is whether he can come close to that success in Denver.

The answer: Not now. Shanahan spent the offseason trying to correct some of the personnel mistakes made under Phillips, who believed the best way to lift the Broncos was to build around Elway. But while bulking up the offense, he forgot to strengthen their defense, which was embarrassed, ranking last in the league.

With several bold strokes, Shanahan moved quickly to try to change all that. He signed two Cleveland defensive linemen, Michael Dean Perry and James Jones, hoping to add a pass rush where there was none — the Broncos managed just 23 sacks last season while giving up 55. Shanahan also signed a starting linebacker (Philadelphia's Britt Hager), a starting cornerback (the Raiders' Lionel Washington) and a possible starting safety (Green Bay's Tim Hauck).

QUARTERBACKS

There is no denying that Elway's overall numbers were excellent last year. He completed 62.1 percent of his passes, threw for 3,490 yards and 16 touchdowns and tossed just 10 interceptions. But Elway's legacy in Denver will always be his come-from-behind heroics, something that happened just twice last year.

When Elway was out with a sore knee last year, Hugh Millen came in and did a fine job. He knows the game well, makes good decisions and fits into the 49ers-style offense Shanahan brings to Denver. Although Millen led the Broncos to an overtime victory against Kansas City last year, he might have a hard time beating out former 49er Bill Musgrave, a Shanahan favorite, for the backup job.

RATING: 10

MILESTONES

- ❑ The Broncos' fourth regular-season home game will be their 200th straight sellout (regular season and postseason).
- ❑ John Elway needs one touchdown pass to reach 200 for his career.
- ❑ Elway (40,046) needs 3,471 yards to move into third place on the NFL's all-time total offense list, ahead of Dan Fouts (43,516), Joe Montana (42,225) and Johnny Unitas (42,016).



Quarterback John Elway should thrive in Mike Shanahan's 49ers-style offense.

POWER RATING
68

RUNNING BACKS

This is one of the murkier areas for the Broncos, who last year thought they had an embarrassment of riches. The future of Leonard Russell, who led the team with nine touchdowns but went down with a ruptured disk in his neck late in the season, is uncertain. Hence, Denver could be counting on Rod Bernstine, who tore knee ligaments early in the season and sat out the rest of the year. The Broncos found the past two seasons that Bernstine was effective running outside but couldn't be counted on to get the tough yards inside. If healthy, he could thrive as a runner and pass-catcher in Shanahan's system.

So could Glyn Milburn, who caught 77 passes last season. Denver signed Aaron Craver through free agency from Miami, and they hope a change of scenery will make a difference.

RATING: 5

RECEIVERS

Talented H-back Shannon Sharpe led the team with 87 catches, giving him 168 over the past two seasons. Sharpe has great hands, runs well after the catch and, most importantly, plays with injuries.

It took the Broncos about half the season to realize they weren't using Anthony Miller's speed properly. Elway periodically aired a bomb to Miller, but the defense always seemed prepared. Finally, they started dumping short passes to Miller on crossing routes and he did the rest. Sound like Jerry Rice? Shanahan hopes so. Miller finished with 60 catches for 1,107 yards and five touchdowns.

On draft day in 1994, the Broncos traded for Atlanta's Mike Pritchard. The Pritchard-Miller-Sharpe combination looked as potent as any in the league until Pritchard fell on a ball in practice and lacerated a kidney before the season was four games old. Pritchard's back, and the Broncos hope his ability to get open will make it impossible for opponents to double-team any of the receivers.

RATING: 10

OFFENSIVE LINE

Elway was sacked 46 times, and Shanahan hopes the addition of right guard Mark Schlereth (Washington) and right tackle Broderick Thompson (Philadelphia) will make a difference.

Who will play center is one of the team's most pressing questions, but one that can't be answered until training camp. Veteran Keith Kartz could return from a knee injury suffered in the 1994 offseason while skiing. Dave Widell, last year's starter, took the money and ran to Jacksonville, leaving second-year pro Tom Nalen as the likely starter.

Schlereth, who has had knee problems, will start at right guard, bumping Brian Habib to left guard. Both Habib and left tackle Gary Zimmerman were one-time Vikings, and the Broncos hope their long association will make for a solid left side. Zimmerman, who has exceptionally quick feet, is still one of the premier left tackles in the game, but he allowed more sacks than usual last season.

RATING: 5

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
57	Allen Aldridge	LB	6-1/245	2	Houston
58	Elijah Alexander	LB	6-2/230	4	Kansas State
27	Steve Atwater	S	6-3/217	7	Arkansas
33	Rod Bernstine	RB	6-3/238	9	Texas A&M
34	Tyrone Braxton	CB	5-11/185	8	No. Dakota State
28	Butler By'not'e	CB	5-9/190	2	Ohio State
89	Dwayne Carswell	TE	6-3/261	2	Liberty
43	Derrick Clark	RB	6-1/235	2	Evangel College
29	Aaron Craver	RB	6-0/220	5	Fresno State
39	Ray Crockett	CB	5-10/185	7	Baylor
99	Shane Dronett	DE	6-6/275	4	Texas
1	Jason Elam	K	5-11/192	3	Hawaii
7	John Elway	QB	6-3/215	13	Stanford
88	Jerry Evans	TE	6-4/250	3	Toledo
73	Simon Fletcher	LB	6-6/240	11	Houston
24	Randy Fuller	CB	5-9/173	2	Tennessee State
75	Brian Habib	G	6-7/299	7	Washington
54	Britt Hager	LB	6-1/225	7	Texas
40	Darryl Hall	S	6-2/210	3	Washington
96	Harald Hasselbach	DE	6-6/280	2	Washington
37	Tim Hauck	S	5-10/185	6	Montana
21	Randy Hilliard	CB	5-11/165	6	N.W. Louisiana
12	Brad Hunter	P	6-5/260	1	BYU
50	Ray Jacobs	LB	6-2/244	2	North Carolina
79	Chuck Johnson	OL	6-3/290	2	Texas
82	Vance Johnson	WR	5-11/185	10	Arizona
93	James Jones	DT	6-2/290	5	No. Iowa
31	Rondell Jones	S	6-2/210	3	North Carolina
72	Keith Kartz	C	6-4/270	9	California
80	Tony Kimbrough	WR	6-2/192	3	Jackson State
62	Bill Lewis	C	6-6/290	10	Nebraska
97	Mike Lodish	DT	6-3/280	6	UCLA
87	Ed McCaffrey	WR	6-5/215	5	Stanford
61	Bob Meeks	G	6-2/279	4	Auburn
22	Glyn Milburn	RB	5-8/177	3	Stanford
17	Hugh Millen	QB	6-5/216	10	Washington
83	Anthony Miller	WR	5-11/190	9	Tennessee
14	Bill Musgrave	QB	6-2/205	5	Oregon
66	Tom Nalen	C	6-2/280	2	Boston College
95	Michael Dean Perry	DT	6-1/285	8	Clemson
81	Mike Pritchard	WR	5-10/190	5	Colorado
38	Reggie Rivers	RB	6-1/215	5	S.W. Texas State
94	Jeff Robinson	DE	6-4/265	3	Idaho
16	Tom Rouen	P	6-3/215	3	Colorado
42	Leonard Russell	RB	6-2/235	5	Arizona State
69	Mark Schlereth	G	6-3/278	7	Idaho
74	Bill Schultz	T	6-5/305	6	USC
84	Shannon Sharpe	TE	6-2/230	6	Savannah State
26	Eric Thomas	CB	5-11/184	9	Tulane
76	Broderick Thompson	T	6-5/295	10	Kansas
48	Lionel Washington	CB	6-0/185	13	Tulane
90	Dan Williams	DE	6-4/290	3	Toledo
92	Dave Wyman	LB	6-2/248	9	Stanford
65	Gary Zimmerman	T	6-6/294	10	Oregon

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
4a	Jamie Brown	T	6-8/300	Florida A&M
4b	Ken Brown	LB	6-1/235	Virginia Tech
5	Phil Yeboah-Kodie	LB	6-2/220	Penn State
6a	Fritz Fequiere	OL	6-2/289	Iowa
6b	Terrell Davis	RB	5-11/200	Georgia
7	Bryon Chamberlain	WR	6-1/225	Wayne State



Wideout Anthony Miller and QB John Elway hooked up 60 times last year, good for 1,107 yards.

DEFENSIVE LINE

The Broncos finished last in the league in pass defense last season, and the defensive backfield took a lot of the heat for it. But the line was the main culprit, giving opposing quarterbacks enough time to post a gaudy 88.5 passing rating. Pittsburgh's Kevin Greene had almost as many sacks (14) as the entire Broncos line (18.5).

Perry is the centerpiece of the rebuilding process, although he had an off-year last season with just four sacks. Jones was the Browns' unsung rusher in the middle last year, and the Broncos hope he can increase his sack total (three).

For the first time in six seasons, Simon Fletcher did not crack double digits in sacks. It wasn't a coincidence that, in a year in which he had just seven sacks, Fletcher switched from outside linebacker to defensive end. He struggled from a three-point stance, and teams often double-teamed him, knowing there would be little push coming from the middle. Fletcher will be back at defensive end in the Broncos' 4-3 alignment, and the arrival of Perry and Jones should free him up to use his quickness to rush more effectively.

RATING: 6

LINEBACKERS

First-round bust Mike Croel (fourth overall in

'94) left for former head coach Dan Reeves and the New York Giants and will be replaced by Hager, whose strength is stuffing the run as an outside linebacker. The other outside linebacker, Eli Alexander, began last season as a question mark and ended it as one of the Broncos' most consistent performers.

Dave Wyman's luck has been nothing but bad. The aggressive linebacker hurt his knee two days before the Broncos' season opener last season and sat out the first 12 games. He returned, began to find his rhythm, then hurt his knee again in the last game of the season and needed surgery. If he's healthy, he'll play middle linebacker.

RATING: 6

SECONDARY

The Broncos allowed 28 touchdown passes last season and managed just 12 interceptions. For those and other reasons, Shanahan made changes in the offseason. Gone is cornerback Ben Smith and veteran safety Dennis Smith. Former Raider Washington, who played for Shanahan in Los Angeles, moves in at right corner, bumping Ray Crockett to Smith's left corner spot. Crockett lacks speed, but he's aggressive. If Crockett can't cut it, free-agent signee Tyrone Braxton will be given a shot. Washington turns 35 this year but

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	... SAN DIEGO	... Lost, 37-34
Sept. 11	... at N.Y. Jets	... Lost, 25-22 (OT)
Sept. 18	... L.A. RAIDERS	... Lost, 48-16
Sept. 26	... at Buffalo	... Lost, 27-20
Oct. 9	... at Seattle	... Won, 16-9
Oct. 17	... KANSAS CITY	... Lost, 31-28
Oct. 23	... at San Diego	... Won, 20-15
Oct. 30	... CLEVELAND	... Won, 26-14
Nov. 6	... at L.A. Rams	... Lost, 27-21
Nov. 13	... SEATTLE	... Won, 17-10
Nov. 20	... ATLANTA	... Won, 32-38
Nov. 27	... CINCINNATI	... Won, 15-13
Dec. 4	... at Kansas City	... Won, 20-17 (OT)
Dec. 11	... at L.A. Raiders	... Lost, 23-13
Dec. 17	... at San Francisco	... Lost, 42-19
Dec. 24	... NEW ORLEANS	... Lost, 30-28

still has the quickness to play man-to-man.

Strong safety Steve Atwater made the Pro Bowl for the fifth straight year last season, and this time there was no doubt he deserved it — he was second on the team with 125 tackles

RATING: 5

SPECIAL TEAMS

Statistically, Tom Rouen was one of the AFC's best punters last season. But, over the past two years, he has not always come through in key moments. They might try to replace him this year. Jason Elam had another solid year, hitting 30 of 37 field-goal attempts and every PAT. Elam must improve from 40 yards and longer, where he was eight of 15 last year.

RATING: 7

DRAFT

The Broncos had their draft the previous two seasons, when they gave up '95 first- and second-round picks for Zimmerman and Pritchard and a third-round pick for Ben Smith. The Broncos didn't choose until the fourth round this year, and they took a flier in the seventh round in Air Force linebacker Steve Russ, believing he'll ask out of his military commitment and play soon in Denver. The Broncos get a decent grade for this draft, even though they were mostly observers.

RATING: 6

COACHING

When Reeves fired Shanahan as the Broncos' offensive coordinator after the 1991 season, he did so because he thought Shanahan and Elway were too close. He claimed Shanahan had told Elway who was being cut before the players themselves knew. The question, of course, is whether a head coach and a player can be close friends and still be successful. Stay tuned.

RATING: 8

Rick Morrissey is a staff writer for the Rocky Mountain News.



KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

'94 RECORD

9-8 (4-4 in Division, 0-1 in playoffs)

COACH

Marty Schottenheimer, 7th season with Chiefs, 59-36-1; 103-63-1 overall

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1994 (Lost to Miami, 27-17, in AFC Wild Card game)

HOME STADIUM

Arrowhead Stadium, Kansas City, Mo. (78,822, grass)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: J.J. Birden, WR (Atl.); Charles Mincy, DB (Minn.); Derrick Graham, T (Car.)

Free-agent signings: James Hasty, DB (NYJ); Jeff Criswell, T (NYJ)

Others: Joe Montana, QB (retired); Greg Kragen, T (selected by Carolina in expansion draft); Monty Grow, DB (selected by Jacksonville in expansion draft)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Russ Ball (assistant strength and conditioning); John Bunting (LBs); Gunther Cunningham (def. coord.); Jim Erkenbeck (TEs); Paul Hackett (off. coord.); Carl Hairston (DL); Woodrow Lowe (defense and special teams asst.); Mike McCarthy (QBs); Jimmy Raye (RBs); Dave Redding (strength and cond.); Al Saunders (assistant head coach/WRs); Kurt Schottenheimer (DBs); Art Shell (OL); Mike Stock (special teams); Darvin Wallis (def. asst./quality control)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	at Seattle, 4
Sept. 10	N.Y. GIANTS, 1
Sept. 17	LOS ANGELES, 1
Sept. 24	at Cleveland, 4
Oct. 1	at Arizona, 4
Oct. 9	SAN DIEGO, 9
Oct. 15	NEW ENGLAND, 1
Oct. 22	at Denver, 4
Oct. 29	Open Date
Nov. 5	WASHINGTON, 1
Nov. 12	at San Diego, 4
Nov. 19	HOUSTON, 8
Nov. 23	at Dallas, 4
Dec. 3	at Los Angeles, 4
Dec. 11	at Miami, 9
Dec. 17	DENVER, 4
Dec. 24	SEATTLE, 1
All times Eastern	

By RICK DEAN

Carl Peterson can't help but chuckle when people ask if there will be Life after Joe for the Kansas City Chiefs.

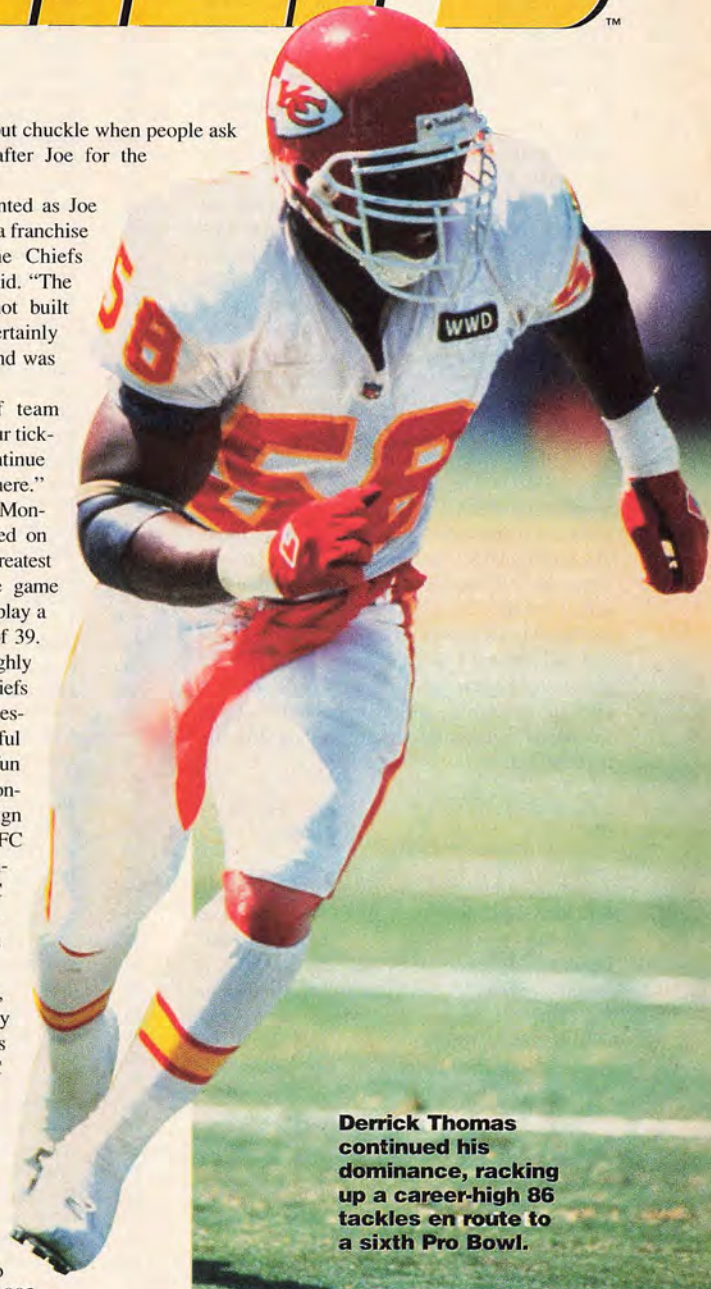
"As important and as talented as Joe Montana is, no one can build a franchise around one individual," the Chiefs president/general manager said. "The Kansas City Chiefs were not built around Joe Montana. He certainly enhanced us and helped us and was a tremendous addition.

"But we were a playoff team before he came. We sold all our tickets before he came. We'll continue to do so when he's no longer here."

The too-short two-year Joe Montana era in Kansas City ended on April 18 when perhaps the greatest quarterback to ever play the game announced that he would not play a 17th NFL season at the age of 39. Thus ended one of the most highly visible periods in recent Chiefs history. Though it was not necessarily one of the most successful periods, Kansas City had a fun ride with Montana at the controls. The Chiefs' 11-5 campaign in 1993 produced their first AFC West title since 1971 and culminated in the club's first AFC Championship game appearance since the Super Chiefs won it all in 1969.

What people tend to forget, however, is that Kansas City finished 11-5 as recently as 1990 and reached the AFC semifinals in 1991. The quarterback then was another old warhorse at the end of a productive career — a guy named Steve DeBerg. They forget, too, that the Chiefs did not score as many points in Montana's two seasons as they did in a 10-6 1992 campaign. Their quarterback then was Dave Krieg.

The cold, hard fact remains that the Chiefs took a major step backward in '94. Though the offense was the NFL's fifth-best and produced more yards than any team in Chiefs history, the 319 points it generated was KC's low-water mark since the 1989 season, the first of the Carl Peterson-Marty Schottenheimer era.



Derrick Thomas continued his dominance, racking up a career-high 86 tackles en route to a sixth Pro Bowl.

MILESTONES

- ❖ The Chiefs will be shooting for a sixth straight playoff appearance.
- ❖ Marcus Allen, with 120 career touchdowns, needs just seven to move past Jim Brown into second place on the NFL career touchdown list. Allen is also 45 receptions short of breaking Roger Craig's NFL record for career receptions by a running back (566).

POWER RATING

67

"[Finishing] 9-8 and losing in the first round of the playoffs is not a step forward," Peterson said. "In the previous five years, with the exception of one year when we stepped sideways, we've been building. This was not a step in the right direction, and the disappointment is obvious with everyone in our organization."

The Chiefs, in short, are right back where they were after the 1992 season — the year Before Joe. Just as they did in two years with Montana, they'd won 20 regular-season games in 1991-'92 before ending the '92 campaign with a first-round playoff loss in San Diego. And merely getting to the playoffs is no longer acceptable in Kansas City.

"If you measure consistency by getting into the playoffs, certainly we've done that as well as anybody [playoff appearances each of the past five years]," Peterson added. "But we're not pleased just to get to the playoffs. We want to get deep into the playoffs, and that means getting to the conference championship game and winning that."

QUARTERBACKS

When the Chiefs acquired Steve Bono in an April 1994 trade from San Francisco, they wanted more than a backup for Montana. They wanted a quarterback of the future. After backing up Montana and Steve Young for 10 seasons, the 33-year-old Bono is the designated starter for the first time since his UCLA days. He started two games in Kansas City last year and had 300-yard outings in both, though K.C. lost both of them. Matt Blundin, still untested after three seasons, will compete with veteran free-agent acquisition Rich Gannon for the backup spot.

RATING: 5

RUNNING BACKS

Can the venerable Marcus Allen have one more productive season at age 35? Last year, the future Hall of Famer produced 1,058 yards from scrimmage (on 189 carries and 42 receptions) in his 13th NFL season. Second-year man Greg Hill, K.C.'s top draft pick in '94, waits in the wings. Unheralded fullback Kimble Anders was the team's top receiver (67 catches), and backup Donnell Bennett showed promise as a rookie before a late-season knee injury.

RATING: 7

RECEIVERS

The game-breaking threat still isn't here. With Montana either reluctant or unable to throw long effectively, speedster Willie Davis (51 catches, 822 yards) was not a consistent deep threat, though he can be. Second-year man Lake Dawson (37 receptions) will step into the starting void left by the free-agent departure of J.J. Birden. The draft-day acquisition of Victor Bailey from Philadelphia gives Kansas City the physical receiver it has coveted. The tight end position is strong with Keith Cash coming back after missing 10 games with a knee injury and Derrick Walker (36 catches) re-signed.

RATING: 7

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
5	Louie Aguiar	P	6-2/222	6	Utah State
56	Arnold Ale	LB	6-3/234	2	UCLA
32	Marcus Allen	RB	6-2/210	14	USC
76	John Alt	T	6-8/307	12	Iowa
38	Kimble Anders	FB	5-11/230	5	Houston
44	Darren Anderson	CB	5-10/180	3	Toledo
85	Victor Bailey	WR	6-2/196	3	Missouri
30	Donnell Bennett	FB	6-0/241	2	Miami (Fla.)
14	Matt Blundin	QB	6-6/233	4	Virginia
13	Steve Bono	QB	6-4/215	11	UCLA
99	Vaughn Booker	DE	6-5/283	2	Cincinnati
34	Dale Carter	CB	6-1/188	4	Tennessee
89	Keith Cash	TE	6-4/248	4	Texas
25	Mark Collins	CB	5-10/196	10	CS-Fullerton
69	Jeff Criswell	T	6-7/291	9	Graceland (Iowa)
50	Anthony Davis	LB	6-0/231	3	Utah
84	Willie Davis	WR	6-0/181	4	Central Arkansas
80	Lake Dawson	WR	6-1/204	2	Notre Dame
6	Allen DeGraffenreid	WR	6-2/210	1	Ohio State
23	Ron Dickerson	RB	6-0/225	3	Arkansas
2	Lin Elliott	K	6-0/182	4	Texas Tech
59	Jaime Fields	LB	5-11/236	3	Washington
41	David Fulcher	S	6-3/238	9	Arizona State
12	Rich Gannon	QB	6-3/208	8	Delaware
87	Tracy Greene	TE	6-5/282	2	Grambling
61	Tim Grunhard	C	6-2/299	6	Notre Dame
53	Rick Hamilton	LB	6-2/241	3	Central Florida
40	James Hasty	CB	6-0/201	8	Washington State
29	Greg Hill	RB	6-11/205	2	Texas A&M
57	George Jamison	LB	6-1/235	10	Cincinnati
93R	John Johnson	LB	6-3/247	5	Clemson
46	Victor Jones	FB	5-8/223	5	Louisiana State
65	Lindsay Knapp	G/T	6-6/290	3	Notre Dame
88	Sean LaChapelle	WR	6-3/205	2	UCLA
42	Ronnie Lott	S	6-1/203	15	USC
51	Greg Manusky	LB	6-1/233	8	Colgate
16	Steve Matthews	QB	6-3/209	1	Memphis State
77	Pellom McDaniels	DE	6-3/275	3	Oregon State
92	Darren Mickell	DE	6-4/284	4	Florida
81	Chris Penn	WR	6-0/198	2	Tulsa
75	Joe Phillips	DT	6-5/300	10	SMU
49	Tony Richardson	FB	6-1/224	1	Auburn
52	Tracy Rogers	LB	6-2/241	6	Fresno State
97	Dan Saleamua	DT	6-0/300	9	Arizona State
91R	Eric Shaw	LB	6-3/247	4	Louisiana State
68	Will Shields	G	6-3/300	3	Nebraska
66	Ricky Siglar	T	6-7/307	4	San Jose State
54	Tracy Simien	LB	6-1/250	5	Texas Christian
90	Neil Smith	DE	6-4/273	8	Nebraska
47W	Tommie Stowers	TE	6-3/240	4	Missouri
79	Dave Szott	G	6-4/290	6	Penn State
27	Jay Taylor	CB	5-10/170	7	San Jose State
24	Doug Terry	S	5-11/204	4	Kansas
58	Derrick Thomas	LB	6-3/247	7	Alabama
94	Keith Traylor	DT	6-2/295	3	Cent. Oklahoma
73	Joe Valerio	G/C	6-5/295	5	Pennsylvania
21	Jon Vaughn	RB	5-9/203	5	Michigan
72	Danny Villa	G	6-5/308	9	Arizona State
98	Rob Waldrop	DT	6-1/276	2	Arizona
82	Derrick Walker	TE	6-0/244	6	Michigan
62	David Ware	T	6-5/290	3	Virginia
48	Brian Washington	S	6-1/210	7	Nebraska
26R	Tim Watson	S	6-1/215	3	Howard
35	William White	S	5-10/200	8	Ohio State

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1	Trezelle Jenkins	T	6-7/322	Michigan
3a	Tamarick Vanover	WR	5-11/213	Florida State
3b	Troy Dumas	LB	6-3/233	Nebraska
4	Steve Stenstrom	QB	6-2/200	Stanford
5a	Mike Pelton	DT	6-2/284	Auburn
5b	Jerrott Willard	LB	6-1/233	California
6a	Bryan Proby	DT	6-5/283	Arizona State
6b	Tom Barndt	C	6-3/290	Pittsburgh



Neil Smith overcame an injury-plagued season to record 11.5 sacks.

OFFENSIVE LINE

The Chiefs yielded a club-record low 19 sacks last year despite two-time Pro Bowl left tackle John Alt missing three games and failing to complete five others with a chronic back injury. Free-agent addition Jeff Criswell (Jets) will either start at right tackle or replace Alt at left. The Chiefs lost starting right tackle Derrick Graham in the expansion draft but retained backup Ricky Siglar. The interior is solid with young veterans Dave Szott and Will Shields at guard and Tim Grunhard developing into one of the league's best centers.

RATING: 7

DEFENSIVE LINE

Defensive end Neil Smith had a fourth Pro Bowl year despite injuries to an ankle, both thumbs and an elbow that kept him out of two games and limited him in several others. He still managed a team-high 11.5 sacks (sixth-best in the league).

The interior line play was a problem. Kansas City gave up more than 119 rushing yards in seven games last year. Defensive tackle Dan Saleaumua was handicapped by a knee injury, freeing opponents to double-team Joe Phillips. Darren Mickell's first season as a starter was productive, as he split time between defensive tackle and defensive end.

RATING: 7

LINEBACKERS

Derrick Thomas had his finest overall season after moving back to his natural spot from 1993's ill-fated experiment at defensive end. He won team MVP honors and made his sixth Pro Bowl appearance after getting a career-high 86 tackles, 11 sacks, six forced fumbles and 45 quarterback pressures.

Middle linebacker Tracy Simien led the team in tackles (99) for a third straight year, but assumes some of the responsibility for the team's difficulty stopping the run. Veteran George Jamison started 12 of 13 games at the "stack" position the Chiefs must upgrade.

RATING: 7

SECONDARY

The Chiefs tried to upgrade their overall speed by adding three-fourths of the Jets' secondary through free agency. Unfortunately, the Jets ranked only 18th last year in pass defense. Ex-Jet James Hasty will compete with veteran Mark Collins, who was limited by a

thigh bruise and post-concussion problems, for the cornerback spot opposite Dale Carter, who enjoyed his first Pro Bowl season after recording 94 tackles. Either Collins or Hasty will greatly improve the nickel package. Former Jet strong safety Brian Washington will replace David Whitmore. The ageless Ronnie Lott (36) will be given the chance to displace incumbent free safety William White, though Lott's main contribution most likely will be in situation defenses and in overall leadership.

RATING: 7

SPECIAL TEAMS

Lin Elliott replaced the venerable Nick Lowery and converted 25 of 30 field-goal attempts. He tried only three kicks of 45-plus yards and made them all. Punter Louie Aguiar had a career-best 42.1-yard gross average but only a 34.5 net. Big plays were few: Jon Vaughn returned a kickoff 91 yards for a score, and Smith blocked one

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	...at New Orleans	...Lost, 30-17
Sept. 11	...SAN FRANCISCO	...Won, 24-17
Sept. 18	...at Atlanta	...Won, 30-10
Sept. 25	...L.A. RAMS	...Lost, 16-0
Oct. 9	...at San Diego	...Lost, 20-6
Oct. 17	...at Denver	...Won, 31-28
Oct. 23	...SEATTLE	...Won, 38-23
Oct. 30	...at Buffalo	...Lost, 44-10
Nov. 6	...L.A. RAIDERS	...Won, 13-3
Nov. 13	...SAN DIEGO	...Lost, 14-13
Nov. 20	...CLEVELAND	...Won, 20-13
Nov. 27	...at Seattle	...Lost, 10-9
Dec. 4	...DENVER	...Lost, 20-17
Dec. 12	...at Miami	...Lost, 45-29
Dec. 18	...HOUSTON	...Won, 31-9
Dec. 24	...at L.A. Raiders	...Won, 19-9
Dec. 31	...at Miami	...Lost, 27-17*

*AFC Wild Card game

field goal for a team that once blocked them routinely. The kickoff coverage team limited opponents to a drive-start at the 26-yard line, sixth-best in the NFL.

RATING: 6

DRAFT

The Chiefs saw a potential starter in Michigan tackle Trezelle Jenkins, a 6-foot-7, 322-pound redshirt junior. Few draft analysts considered him a first-round choice. So what? K.C. thinks he'll have time to develop under offensive line coach Art Shell and behind Alt. The second-round trade for Bailey should help immediately. Third-round pick Tamarick Vanover played in the CFL last year after leaving Florida State before his junior season but is an impact returner Kansas City thinks will help immediately. Fourth-round pick Steve Stenstrom played three years under former 49ers coach Bill Walsh at Stanford.

RATING: 7

COACHING

Heads rolled after a disappointing '94 campaign. Departing were defensive coordinator Dave Adolph (San Diego), veteran defensive line coach Tom Pratt (Tampa Bay), offensive line coach Alex Gibbs (Denver) and defensive backs coach Herman Edwards (who returned to the scouting department). Schottenheimer scored a major coup in landing Hall of Famer Shell as his line coach after Shell and Raiders owner/GM Al Davis parted ways in Los Angeles. The new defensive coordinator is ex-Raiders coach Gunter Cunningham, who promises a more attacking defense than Adolph's read-and-react. Two new additions, former stars Carl Hairston and Woodrow Lowe, have little NFL coaching experience. Kurt Schottenheimer, always a target of fan criticism because of his last name, has been moved from special teams to defensive backs, which should bring him even more heat.

RATING: 7

Rick Dean covers the Chiefs for the Topeka (Kan.) Capital-Journal.



SEATTLE Seahawks

'94 RECORD

6-10 (2-6 in Division)

COACH

Dennis Erickson, 1st season with Seahawks

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1988 (Lost to Cincinnati, 21-13, in divisional semifinals)

HOME STADIUM

Kingdome, Seattle, Wash. (66,000, artificial)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: John Kasay, K (Car.); Dan McGwire, QB (Mia.); Rufus Porter, LB (N.O.); Rod Stephens, LB (Wash.); Ray Donaldson, C (Dall.); Patrick Hunter, CB (Ariz.); Jerry Taylor, DB (Atl.)

Free-agent signings: Tony Covington, S (T.B.); John Friesz, QB (Wash.); Winston Moss, LB (L.A.); Tyrone Stowe, LB (Wash.); Jim Sweeney, C, (NYJ)

Others: Ricky Proehl, WR (trade with Ariz.); Corey Harris, CB (trade with Green Bay)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Dave Arnold (special teams); Tony Brasher (DL); Bob Bratkowski (off. coord./WRs); Dave Brown (asst. def.); Tom Catlin (quality control); Dana LeDue (strength and cond.); Greg McMakin (def. coord.); Arnie Matsumoto (staff asst.); Howard Mudd (OL); Mike Murphy (LBs); Rich Olson (QB); Willy Robinson (DBs); Clarence Shelmon (RBs); Greg Smith (asst. head coach/TEs)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	KANSAS CITY, 4
Sept. 10	at San Diego, 4
Sept. 17	CINCINNATI, 4
Sept. 24	Open Date
Oct. 1	DENVER, 4
Oct. 8	at Los Angeles, 4
Oct. 15	at Buffalo, 1
Oct. 22	SAN DIEGO, 4
Oct. 29	at Arizona, 4
Nov. 5	N.Y. GIANTS, 4
Nov. 12	at Jacksonville, 1
Nov. 19	at Washington, 1
Nov. 26	N.Y. JETS, 4
Dec. 3	PHILADELPHIA, 4
Dec. 10	at Denver, 4
Dec. 17	LOS ANGELES, 8
Dec. 24	at Kansas City, 1
All times Eastern	

By CLARE FARNSWORTH

On paper, Dennis Erickson has made almost all the right moves since becoming the Seattle Seahawks' head coach in January.

For starters, he brought with him from the University of Miami both an offensive scheme that will better utilize the talents of quarterback Rick Mirer, and a defensive strategy that will unleash the destructive talents of defensive tackle Cortez Kennedy. The Seahawks were stung by the losses of five starters to free agency, but Erickson moved quickly to not only plug holes but also upgrade positions by signing linebacker Winston Moss from the Los Angeles Raiders and center Jim Sweeney from the New York Jets.

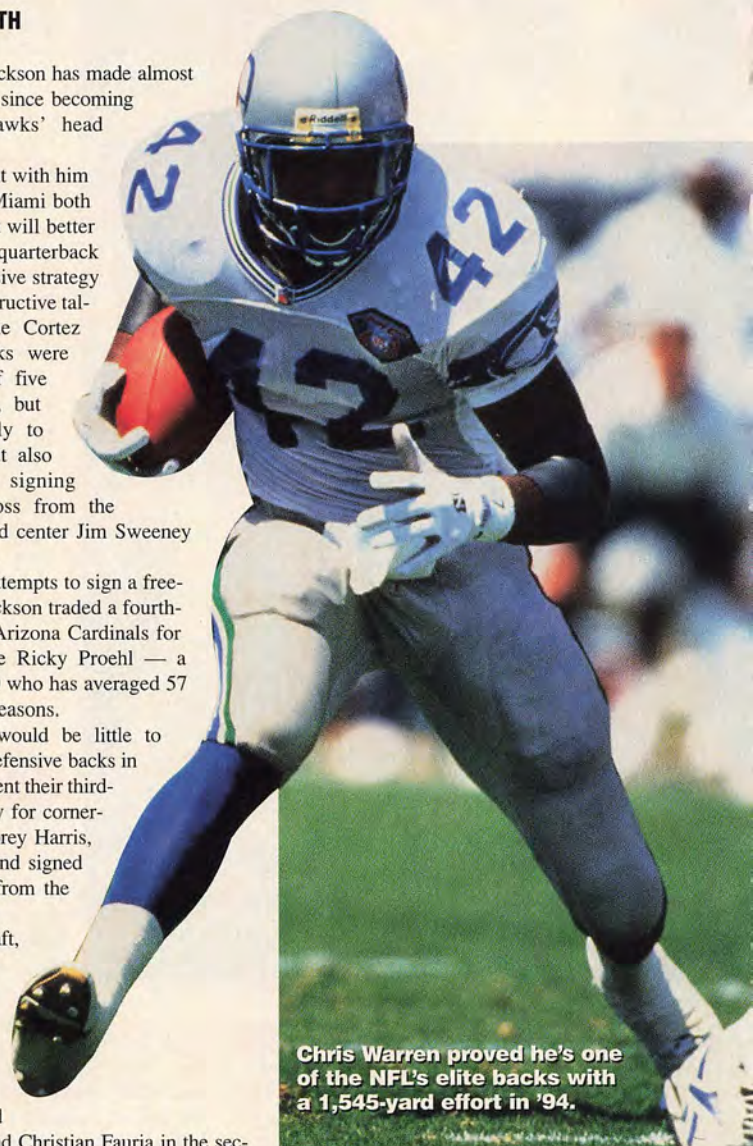
Stymied in repeated attempts to sign a free-agent wide receiver, Erickson traded a fourth-round draft pick to the Arizona Cardinals for the reliable and durable Ricky Proehl — a third-round pick in 1990 who has averaged 57 receptions in five NFL seasons.

Deciding that there would be little to choose from among the defensive backs in the draft, the Seahawks sent their third-round pick to Green Bay for cornerback/return specialist Corey Harris, a restricted free agent, and signed safety Tony Covington from the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Then there was the draft, when Erickson addressed the team's most pressing needs by selecting lightning-quick Ohio State wide receiver Joey Galloway in the first round and adding Colorado tight end Christian Fauria in the second round.

Whether all these moves are enough to keep the Seahawks from finishing last in the AFC West for a fourth straight season remains to be seen.

"It all looks good right now," Erickson said. "But we won't really know until we start playing some games."



Chris Warren proved he's one of the NFL's elite backs with a 1,545-yard effort in '94.

MILESTONES

- Steve Largent, who retired after the 1989 season as the NFL's all-time leader in receptions, receiving yards and TD catches, becomes the first Seahawk inducted into the Hall of Fame.
- Chris Warren could become only the 13th running back in NFL history to have four straight 1,000-yard seasons.

POWER RATING
65

QUARTERBACKS

Rick Mirer's numbers were down last year (195 of 381 for 2,151 yards, 11 TDs and seven INTs) from his record-setting rookie season, and he missed the final three games after fracturing his left thumb. But Erickson's offense could be the best thing that ever happened to Mirer's career. It will showcase his strengths — mobility, accuracy, quick release — by featuring shorter drops, more rollouts and play-action fakes and at least one extra receiver on most plays.

With the addition of John Friesz in free agency and the return of Stan Gelbaugh, the Seahawks have as solid a threesome as there is in the league.

RATING: 7

RUNNING BACKS

After back-to-back 1,000-yard seasons in 1992 and 1993, Chris Warren took his game to the next level last year, rushing for a conference-leading and team-record 1,545 yards. He also scored 11 touchdowns and added 41 receptions. Warren, whose size (225 pounds) and gliding style mask his speed and power, also should benefit from Erickson's more wide-open attack. The fullback tandem of Tracy Johnson and Steve Smith will prompt Erickson to use more two-back sets than he did as a college coach. Lamar Smith, last year's little-used third-round draft pick, has the qualities to be a productive player, and Mack Strong's versatility and special-teams play make him a valuable fifth back.

RATING: 8

RECEIVERS

This area needed the most help and got it with the additions of Proehl (51 catches and five TDs last year in the Cardinals' 25th-ranked offense) and Galloway. Proehl has skills similar to those of Brian Blades (81 and 80 receptions the past two seasons). Galloway's speed (4.18 seconds for 40 yards), combined with his explosive burst and polished receiving skills, provide an element that has been missing from the Seahawks' passing game and is vital to Erickson's offense. James McKnight, a free-agent signee last year, has moved ahead of drafted projects Michael Bates and Terrance Warren in the battle for the fourth spot.

Tight end Paul Green (career-best 30 receptions last year) has soft hands but wears down when called upon to block every down, as was the case last year when Ferrell Edmunds was lost with a career-ending back injury. Fauria will help in the running game and should develop into an every-down player.

RATING: 7

OFFENSIVE LINE

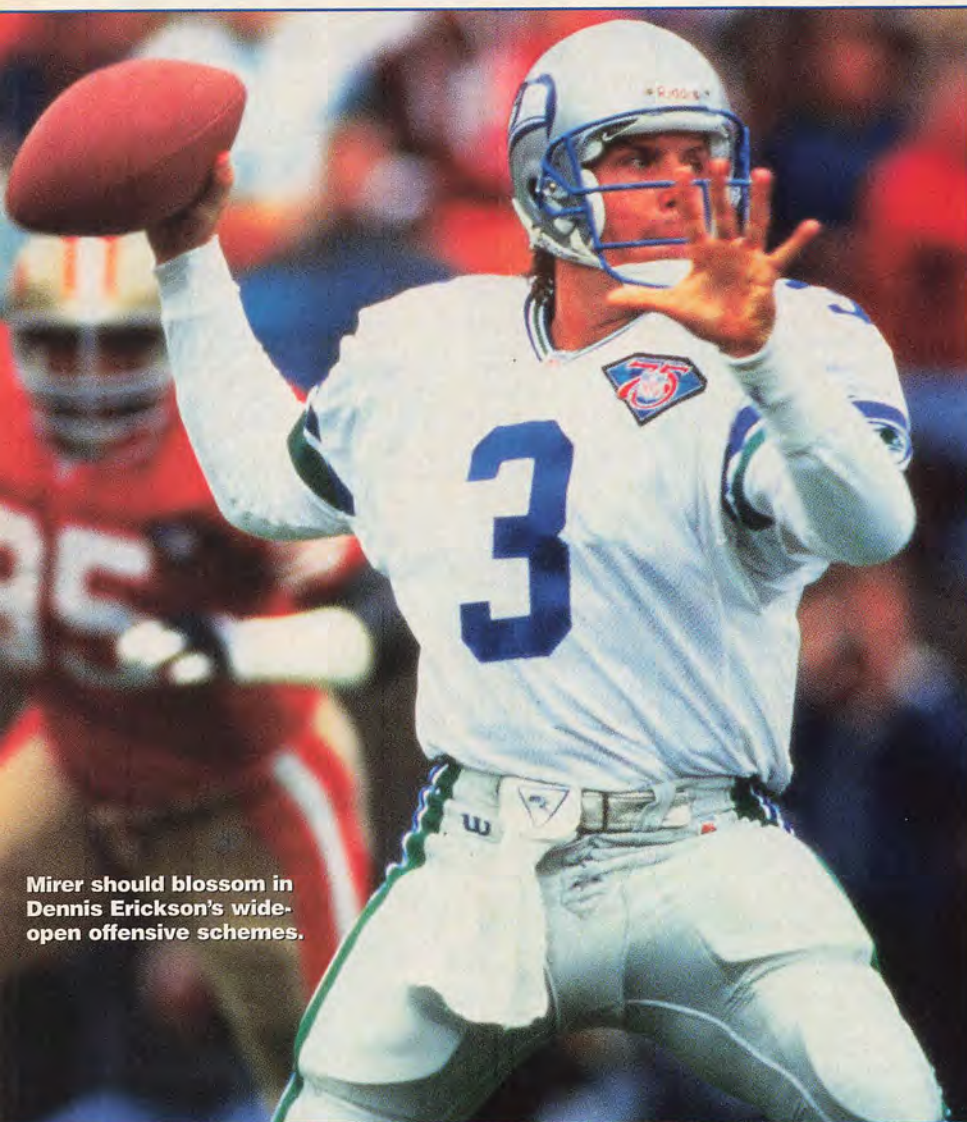
With Sweeney moving in for Ray Donaldson, who signed with the Dallas Cowboys, the Seahawks will have their fifth different starting five in as many years. Right tackle Howard Ballard was signed away from the Buffalo Bills in free agency last year, but never played up to his Pro Bowl status of the previous two years. Left tackle Ray Roberts is coming off surgery after breaking his left ankle in December. At guards, the starters are Jeff Blakeshear, who is making a

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
98	Sam Adams	DT	6-3/285	2	Texas A&M
74	James Atkins	T	6-6/303	2	SW Louisiana
75	Howard Ballard	T	6-6/332	8	Alabama A&M
81	Michael Bates	WR	5-10/196	3	Arizona
20	Jay Bellamy	S	5-11/193	2	Rutgers
50	Duane Bickett	LB	6-5/245	11	USC
25	Robert Blackmon	S	6-0/203	6	Baylor
69	Jeff Blakeshear	G	6-6/323	3	NE Louisiana
89	Brian Blades	WR	5-11/186	8	Miami (Fla.)
51	David Brandon	LB	6-4/240	9	Memphis State
29	Tony Brown	CB	5-9/183	4	Fresno State
22	Beno Bryant	RB	5-9/170	1	Washington
27	Tony Covington	S	5-11/193	5	Virginia
48	Carlester Crumpler	TE	6-6/255	2	East Carolina
23	Forey Duckett	S	6-3/195	3	Nevada
67	Antonio Edwards	DE	6-3/271	6	Valdosta State
17	John Friesz	QB	6-4/220	6	Idaho
18	Stan Gelbaugh	QB	6-3/215	8	Maryland
26	Carlton Gray	CB	6-0/196	3	UCLA
87	Paul Green	TE	6-3/230	4	USC
64	Bobby Hamilton	DE	6-4/269	2	S. Mississippi
30	Corey Harris	CB	5-11/190	4	Vanderbilt
11	Ronnie Harris	WR	5-11/180	1	Oregon
76	Bill Hitchcock	G	6-6/306	5	Purdue
47	Kirby Jackson	CB	5-10/176	9	Mississippi State
43	Tracy Johnson	FB	6-0/242	7	Clemson
77	Matt Joyce	G	6-7/283	1	Richmond
83	Trey Junkin	TE	6-2/241	13	Louisiana Tech
65	Mike Kegarise	G	6-5/300	2	Edinboro
78	Mike Keim	T	6-7/302	4	Brigham Young
96	Cortez Kennedy	DT	6-3/293	6	Miami (Fla.)
34	Dion Lambert	S	6-1/190	3	UCLA
52	Kevin Mawae	G	6-4/288	2	Louisiana State
99	Michael McCrary	DE	6-4/267	3	Wake Forest
19	James McKnight	WR	6-0/186	1	Liberty
3	Rick Mirer	QB	6-2/211	3	Notre Dame
71	Mike Moody	T	6-7/305	1	USC
55	Winston Moss	LB	6-3/245	9	Miami
72	Joe Nash	DT	6-3/278	14	Boston College
37	Nate Odomes	CB	5-10/188	9	Wisconsin
2	Todd Peterson	K	5-10/175	1	Georgia
82	Ricky Proehl	WR	6-0/190	6	Wake Forest
73	Ray Roberts	T	6-6/308	4	Virginia
41	Eugene Robinson	S	6-0/195	11	Colgate
21	Rafael Robinson	S	5-11/195	4	Wisconsin
70	Michael Sinclair	DE	6-4/271	5	E. New Mexico
36	Lamar Smith	RB	5-11/224	2	Houston
35	Steve Smith	FB	6-1/242	9	Penn State
28	Del Spear	S	6-0/200	3	Florida
58	Bob Spitulski	LB	6-3/246	4	Central Florida
59	Tyrone Stowe	LB	6-2/250	9	Rutgers
38	Mack Strong	FB	6-0/222	2	Georgia
53	Jim Sweeney	C	6-4/284	12	Pittsburgh
86	Robb Thomas	WR	5-11/175	7	Oregon State
56	Joe Tofflemire	C	6-2/277	7	Arizona
14	Rick Tuten	P	6-2/218	7	Florida State
42	Chris Warren	RB	6-2/225	6	Ferrum
88	Terrance Warren	WR	6-1/205	3	Hampton (Va.)
31	Orlando Watters	CB	5-11/173	2	Arkansas
95	Dean Wells	LB	6-3/242	3	Kentucky
91	Matt Werner	DT	6-3/262	2	UCLA
93	Brent Williams	DE	6-4/283	10	Toledo
90	Terry Wooden	LB	6-3/239	6	Syracuse

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1	Joey Galloway	WR	5-11/188	Ohio State
2	Christian Fauria	TE	6-4/245	Colorado
4	Jason Kyle	LB	6-3/240	Arizona St.
6	Henry McMillian	DT	6-3/275	Florida
6	Eddie Goines	WR	6-0/186	N.C. State
7	Keif Bryant	DE	6-4/275	Rutgers



Mirer should blossom in Dennis Erickson's wide-open offensive schemes.

habit of reporting overweight and running out of gas as the season progresses, and Kevin Mawae, last year's second-round draft pick as a center. Quality depth also is a problem, but the Seahawks still led the AFC in rushing two years ago and were second last year.

RATING: 6

DEFENSIVE LINE

Kennedy's numbers have steadily decreased since he was voted NFL Defensive Player of the Year in 1992, while his frustration level has increased. He had 70 tackles with just four sacks last year, but that should change with the switch from the old read-and-react two-gap style to Erickson's more aggressive one-gap system. The key to Erickson's defensive philosophy is the tackles, and the key to improved line play for a defense that slipped to No. 23 in 1994 is Sam Adams, last year's underachieving first-round draft pick who battled both injuries and his weight. Antonio Edwards, an eighth-round pick in 1993, has blossomed into a starter, but the Seahawks lack a Pro Bowl-caliber end.

RATING: 7

LINEBACKERS

Terry Wooden was the team's defensive MVP last year with a career-best 127 tackles, but he is the only returning starter. Leading tackler Rod Stephens signed with Washington in free agency, and Rufus Porter jumped to New Orleans.

It looks bad, but this unit could be improved if third-year pro Dean Wells shows as much production as potential in the middle for Stephens and Moss, who plays the run better than Porter on the right side. Tyrone Stowe, a run-stuffer in the middle, was signed for insurance, joining a solid but oft-injured group of backups that includes Duane Bickett, Bob Spilulski and David Brandon.

RATING: 6

SECONDARY

If healthy, the foursome of cornerbacks Nate Odomes and Carlton Gray and safeties Eugene Robinson and Robert Blackmon are the strength of this defense. In last year's season finale, however, only Blackmon could play. Odomes, a two-time Pro Bowl player with the Bills, blew out a knee playing basketball last June after signing as a free agent. Robinson, also a Pro Bowl pick in 1992 and 1993,

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	...at Washington	...Won, 28-7
Sept. 11	...at L.A. Raiders	...Won, 38-9
Sept. 18	...SAN DIEGO	...Lost, 24-10
Sept. 25	...PITTSBURGH	...Won, 30-13
Oct. 2	...at Indianapolis	...Lost, 17-15
Oct. 9	...DENVER	...Lost, 16-9
Oct. 23	...at Kansas City	...Lost, 38-23
Oct. 30	...at San Diego	...Lost, 35-15
Nov. 6	...CINCINNATI	...Lost, 20-17 (OT)
Nov. 13	...at Denver	...Lost, 17-10
Nov. 20	...TAMPA BAY	...Won, 22-21
Nov. 27	...KANSAS CITY	...Won, 10-9
Dec. 4	...INDIANAPOLIS	...Lost, 31-19
Dec. 11	...at Houston	...Won, 16-14
Dec. 18	...L.A. RAIDERS	...Lost, 17-16
Dec. 24	...at Cleveland	...Lost, 35-9

tore an Achilles tendon in December and Gray fractured a forearm in November. Fortunately, all are back. The Seahawks also improved their nickel package and depth by getting Harris and Covington.

RATING: 8

SPECIAL TEAMS

Rick Tuten has been the NFL's best punter over the past three seasons — punting a club-record 108 times in 1992, winning the Golden Foot Award in 1993 and finally being voted to the Pro Bowl last year. But kicker John Kasay took his strong and accurate left leg to Carolina via free agency and has been replaced by Todd Peterson (2 of 4 on FGs during a three-game stint with the Cardinals last year). The return game is much-improved. Galloway will return punts, while Harris — a versatile and dangerous returner — will help on kickoffs.

RATING: 4

DRAFT

Erickson got the one player he really wanted in Galloway and another he had to have in Fauria. Sixth-round pick Eddie Goines, a record-setting wideout from North Carolina State, had reconstructive knee surgery in November but could be a sleeper — if not this season, then next year.

RATING: 6

COACHING

Erickson jokes that the best thing about being an NFL coach is that he's still unbeaten. But what he has done in his first few months is nothing to laugh about. In addition to acquiring the players he needed, Erickson retained the right assistants (Tom Catlin, Howard Mudd and Clarence Shelmon) to help with continuity and had the half dozen assistants he brought with him from Miami learn new terminology rather than dozens of players. Erickson has provided a spark for a franchise that has not been to the playoffs since 1988 and has not won a postseason game since 1984.

RATING: 6

Clare Farnsworth covers the Seahawks for the Seattle Post Intelligencer.

NFC EAST

PREDICTED ORDER OF FINISH

POWER RATING

1. DALLAS COWBOYS	76
2. NEW YORK GIANTS	72
3. ARIZONA CARDINALS	66
4. WASHINGTON REDSKINS	62
5. PHILADELPHIA EAGLES	60



Emmitt Smith,
Dallas

JOE'S PLAYOFF PICKS

COWBOYS: Because of Troy Aikman, Emmitt Smith and Michael Irvin, they're my pick to win the NFC East, but this is a team in trouble. Dallas has lost so many great players, and even though they talked Charles Haley out of retirement for a year, the question is can he stay healthy? Free agency has blasted holes in this battleship, once the class of the league.

GIANTS: A season-ending six-game winning streak has folks in Gotham excited. Sure, the loss of Dave Meggett is a big one, but the Giants added Tyrone Wheatley and Herschel Walker in the offseason to an already potent ground attack led by Rodney Hampton. If young quarterback Dave Brown continues to improve, this team could be real tough.

FINAL '94 STANDINGS	OVERALL	DIV.	PF	PA
DALLAS COWBOYS	12-4	7-1	414	248
N.Y. GIANTS	9-7	6-2	279	305
ARIZONA CARDINALS	8-8	4-4	235	267
PHILADELPHIA EAGLES	7-9	3-5	308	308
WASHINGTON REDSKINS	3-13	0-8	320	412

PLAYOFF RESULTS

NFC Divisional Semifinals

Dallas 35, Green Bay 9

NFC Championship

San Francisco 38, Dallas 28



DALLAS COWBOYS

'94 RECORD

13-5 (7-1 in Division, 1-1 in playoffs)

COACH

Barry Switzer, 2nd season with Cowboys, 13-5

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1994 (Lost to 49ers, 38-28, in NFC Championship game)

HOME STADIUM

Texas Stadium, Irving, Texas (65,024, artificial)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Mark Stepnoski, C (Hou.); Alvin Harper, WR (T.B.); James Washington, S (Wash.); Jim Jeffcoat, DE (Buf.); Kenneth Gant, S (T.B.); Darrick Brownlow, LB (Wash.)

Free-agent signings: Ray Donaldson, C (Sea.); Greg Tremble, S (Cle.); Tony Tolbert, DE (re-signed); Jay Novacek, TE (re-signed)

Others: Derrick Lassic, RB (selected by Car. in exp. draft); Willie Jackson, WR (selected by Jack. in exp. draft)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Hubbard Alexander (WRs); Joe Avezzano (special teams); John Blake (DL); Joe Brodsky (RBs); Dave Campo (def. coordinator); Jim Eddy (LBs); Robert Ford (TEs); Steve Hoffman (kicking); Hudson Houck (OL); Ernie Zampese (off. coordinator); Mike Zimmer (secondary)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 4	at N.Y. Giants, 9
Sept. 10	DENVER, 4
Sept. 17	at Minnesota, 8
Sept. 24	ARIZONA, 4
Oct. 1	at Washington, 1
Oct. 8	GREEN BAY, 1
Oct. 15	at San Diego, 4
Oct. 22	Open Date
Oct. 29	at Atlanta, 1
Nov. 6	PHILADELPHIA, 9
Nov. 12	SAN FRANCISCO, 4
Nov. 19	at Los Angeles, 4
Nov. 23	KANSAS CITY, 4
Dec. 3	WASHINGTON, 4
Dec. 10	at Philadelphia, 1
Dec. 17	N.Y. GIANTS, 4
Dec. 25	at Arizona, 9
All times Eastern	

By TIM COWLISHAW

Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones knows he will always receive failing grades in free agency. And he's glad to accept them.

"People always look at teams and see whose free agents they signed, who they lost, and then give them a grade," he said. "We're always going to get F's because we don't sign too many players from other teams. Our focus will always be to re-sign our own players because I wouldn't trade our roster for any in football."

Well, actually he's not trading his roster. He's watching it go away piece by piece — via free agency.

For the second straight offseason, the Cowboys lost some major players — Pro Bowl center Mark Stepnoski (Houston), safety James Washington (Washington), wide receiver Alvin Harper (Tampa Bay) and pass rusher Jim Jeffcoat (Buffalo) topped the list. They did retain wide receiver Michael Irvin, tight end Jay Novacek and defensive end Tony Tolbert at a considerable expense. That left little room under the salary cap for the Cowboys to do anything but trade down in search of depth in the draft. Their 10-player haul was criticized for providing no instant starters, but coach Barry Switzer was happy with the group.

"(Running back) Sherman Williams and (tight end Kendall) Watkins will contribute this year. We feel six of them will be special teams players," Switzer said. "None of us really know what will happen with these players. They'll have to show us that they deserve that chance."

As last year proved, the Cowboys need to improve their depth. America's Team limped into the NFC Championship game. Emmitt Smith had a sore hamstring. Troy Aikman was suffering with a



The 'Boys need a healthy Emmitt Smith come playoff time to beat the 49ers.

MILESTONES

- With 36 straight home sellouts (regular and postseason), Dallas can break its club record of 44 if it hosts a playoff game this season.
- The Cowboys are trying to play in four straight NFC title games for the second time in club history. They reached four in a row from 1970-73.
- With a fifth straight 1,200-yard season, Michael Irvin will become the team's all-time leader in receiving yards.

POWER RATING
76

sore knee. And Irvin had quadricep problems. Still, despite all the injuries, the free-agent losses and the replacement of Jimmy Johnson with Switzer, the Cowboys were still the second-best team in football behind only the world-champion San Francisco 49ers.

With this year's round of defections, particularly Stepanoski and Harper, are the Cowboys a team in decline? They still are the class of the NFC East, thanks to the talented "Big Three" of Smith, Aikman and Irvin and a stingy defense which led the NFL in fewest total yards and passing yards allowed. The season-long question is: Do the Cowboys have what it takes to beat the 49ers? That's the only grade that matters to Jones and his Cowboys.

QUARTERBACKS

Football is Aikman's game. Statistics aren't. Only once in his pro career has he thrown for more than 15 touchdowns. Last year he threw 13 to go with 12 interceptions, but that ratio hardly tells his story. Aikman has two Super Bowl rings, one Super Bowl MVP trophy and has been named to four straight Pro Bowls. His accuracy (64.5 percent in 1994) is the key to the Dallas pass offense.

One of his backups will be Jason Garrett, one of two active Ivy League passers in the NFL (Philadelphia's Jay Fiedler is the other). He's also the only Dallas quarterback ever to lead his team to five touchdowns in the second half of a game, which happened in the Cowboys' 42-31 Thanksgiving Day victory over Green Bay.

RATING: 9

RUNNING BACKS

Only Smith can rush for 1,484 yards and 21 touchdowns and consider it a down year. His average per carry fell from 5.3 to 4.0 yards, which had mostly to do with a banged-up offensive line. Pro Bowl fullback Daryl "Moose" Johnston provides the blocking and the outlet receiving, and now the Cowboys have a legitimate backup to Smith in Williams, their second-round pick from Alabama. Former backup Derrick Lassic, who performed well during Smith's contract holdout two years ago, was selected by Carolina in the expansion draft.

The Cowboys really need Williams to step up and take over some of the workload from Smith, who has entered the playoffs the past two years with significant injuries. Two years ago, it was a bum shoulder. Last season, he suffered from a hamstring pull.

It is in the Cowboys' best interest, and Smith's as well, to cut back the number of Smith's regular-season carries. Smith is on course to become the first NFL back in history to average more than 300 carries per season. Right now, he is averaging 326 carries in his five NFL seasons. If he continues at that pace, chances are that his brilliant career will end prematurely.

RATING: 10

RECEIVERS

Irvin has a contract (five years, \$15 million) worthy of his stats (1,241 yards, six touchdowns in '94). What he no longer has is a feared deep threat on the

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
34	Tommie Agee	FB	6-0/235	9	Auburn
8	Troy Aikman	QB	6-4/228	7	UCLA
73	Larry Allen	T	6-3/325	2	Sonoma St. (Calif.)
56	Reggie Barnes	LB	6-1/240	2	Oklahoma
40	Bill Bates	S	6-1/210	13	Tennessee
97	Michael Batiste	DT	6-3/295	1	Tulane
18	Chris Boniol	K	5-11/159	2	Louisiana Tech
24	Larry Brown	CB	5-11/186	5	Texas Christian
96	Shante Carver	DE	6-5/242	2	Arizona State
44	Lincoln Coleman	RB	6-1/239	3	Baylor
68	Frank Cornish	G/C	6-4/287	6	UCLA
87	John Davis	TE	6-4/257	1	Emporia St. (Kan.)
74	Wayne Dickson	DE	6-3/265	1	Oklahoma
53	Ray Donaldson	C	6-3/300	16	Georgia
58	Dixon Edwards	LB	6-1/225	5	Michigan State
23	Floyd Fields	S	6-1/200	4	Arizona State
46	Joe Fishback	S	6-0/212	6	Carson-Newman
82	Cory Fleming	WR	6-1/216	2	Tennessee
17	Jason Garrett	QB	6-2/195	3	Princeton
94	Charles Haley	DE	6-5/255	10	James Madison
69	George Hegamin	T	6-7/338	2	N.C. State
70	Dale Hellestree	G/C	6-5/286	11	SMU
95	Chad Hennings	DT	6-6/288	4	Air Force
47	Clayton Holmes	CB	5-10/181	4	Carson-Newman
66	Michael Irvin	WR	6-2/205	8	Miami (Fla.)
19	John Jett	P	6-0/194	3	East Carolina
48	Daryl Johnston	FB	6-2/242	7	Syracuse
55	Robert Jones	LB	6-2/237	4	East Carolina
38	David Lang	RB	5-11/210	5	Northern Arizona
78	Leon Lett	DL	6-6/288	5	Emporia St. (Kan.)
31	Brock Marion	S	5-11/189	3	Nevada-Reno
67	Russell Maryland	DT	6-1/279	5	Miami (Fla.)
99	Hurvin McCormack	DT	6-5/274	2	Indiana
45	Stephen McGuire	RB	5-11/215	1	Miami (Fla.)
98	Godfrey Myles	LB	6-1/242	5	Florida
61	Nate Newton	G	6-3/320	10	Florida A&M
84	Jay Novacek	TE	6-4/234	11	Wyoming
76	Jerry Reynolds	T	6-6/315	2	UNLV
52	Jim Schwantz	LB	6-2/232	2	Purdue
59	Darrin Smith	LB	6-1/230	3	Miami (Fla.)
22	Emmitt Smith	RB	5-9/209	6	Florida
26	Kevin Smith	CB	5-11/184	4	Texas A&M
65	Ron Stone	G/T	6-5/309	3	Boston College
30	Darren Studstill	S	6-1/186	1	West Virginia
92	Tony Tolbert	DE	6-6/263	7	Texas-El Paso
25	Greg Tremble	S	5-11/188	1	Georgia
71	Mark Tuinei	T	6-5/305	13	Hawaii
79	Erik Williams	T	6-6/322	5	Central State (Ohio)
29	Germaine Williams	FB	5-10/228	1	Louisiana State
85	Kevin Williams	WR	5-9/195	3	Miami (Fla.)
28	Darren Woodson	S	6-1/215	4	Arizona State

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
2	Sherman Williams	RB	5-8/190	Alabama
2a	Kendell Watkins	TE	6-1/305	Mississippi State
2b	Shane Hannah	G	6-5/345	Michigan State
3	Charlie Williams	S	6-0/190	Bowling Green
4	Eric Bjornson	TE	6-4/215	Washington
4a	Alundis Brice	CB	5-10/178	Mississippi
4b	Linc Harden	LB	6-3/238	Oklahoma State
5	Edward Hervey	WR	6-3/179	USC
5a	Dana Howard	LB	6-0/238	Illinois
7	Oscar Sturgis	DE	6-5/280	North Carolina



Kevin Williams will take Alvin Harper's spot opposite Michael Irvin.

opposite side now that Harper's in Tampa Bay. Harper averaged almost 25 yards per catch and a touchdown every four grabs last season.

Cory Fleming and Kevin Williams will battle for Harper's spot. Bet on Williams, whom Aikman has shown more and more confidence in. Williams caught six balls for 78 yards in the Cowboys' season-ending 38-28 loss to the 49ers in the NFC Championship game. He had just 13 catches for 181 yards during the regular season.

While replacing Harper is a concern, the tight end position is strong, thanks to the return of Novacek (47 catches, 475 yards, two TDs). Novacek remains one of the game's best at his position, particularly in third-down situations. He's also a favorite target of Aikman's, having caught 16 passes in last year's two playoff games.

RATING: 8

OFFENSIVE LINE

If Erik Williams' knee and off-the-field problems don't keep him off the field, then the club will be fine. Ray Donaldson, age 37, plugs in nicely for Stepnoski, while Mark Tuinei and Nate Newton are still Pro Bowlers and Larry Allen could develop into one. Aikman was sacked 14 times last season, and the line will have to be at least as strong this season as their star quarterback gets older.

RATING: 8

DEFENSIVE LINE

There may be no better front four than Charles

Haley, Leon Lett, Russell Maryland and Tolbert. The first three have played in Pro Bowls and Tolbert has the potential.

Lett, best known for his Thanksgiving day blunder vs. Miami and getting run down by Buffalo's Don Beebe in Super Bowl XXVII, has quietly emerged as one of the game's best tackles. He had 68 tackles a year ago, including four sacks and 26 quarterback hurries. Haley, second in the NFC with 12.5 sacks last season, announced his retirement in the locker room shortly after the Cowboys lost the NFC title game to the 49ers. Fortunately for the Cowboys, Haley had a change of heart and will be back for his 10th season and another shot at the 49ers.

Depth comes from Chad Hennings at tackle, while the Cowboys can only hope Shante Carver, drafted as the heir apparent to Haley, makes a big leap forward at end. Carver played sparingly last season and finished with just five tackles, one for a loss.

RATING: 9

LINEBACKERS

This is more than a functional unit. Darrin Smith (103 tackles, two INTs) makes it that way on the weak side. Robert Jones was in Jimmy Johnson's doghouse before becoming Switzer's teacher's pet. He responded with a breakthrough season, which included a team-high 162 tackles and four tackles for a loss. Dixon Edwards is excellent if undersized on the strong side. He registered 104 tackles, including five for a loss.

RATING: 7

SECONDARY

There's a hole where Washington used to be that the Cowboys did not address in the draft. Washington tied for the team lead with five interceptions in '94. On the plus side, Darren Woodson is one of the game's best young safeties, and Kevin Smith should prove he's in a similar class at left corner. Woodson picked off five passes last season, including one which he returned 94 yards for a touchdown against the Philadelphia Eagles. Smith, who had six interceptions in 1993, slipped to just two last year because teams were less willing to throw his way.

Larry Brown has to regain his confidence after a mediocre season.

RATING: 7

SPECIAL TEAMS

They have gone from great to good or average in recent years. Coverage was down last year, and the Cowboys lost some of their top tacklers

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	...at Pittsburgh	...Won, 26-9
Sept. 11	...HOUSTON	...Won, 20-17
Sept. 19	...DETROIT	...Lost, 20-17 (OT)
Oct. 2	...at Washington	...Won, 34-7
Oct. 9	...ARIZONA	...Won, 38-3
Oct. 16	...PHILADELPHIA	...Won, 24-13
Oct. 23	...at Arizona	...Won, 28-21
Oct. 30	...at Cincinnati	...Won, 23-20
Nov. 7	...N.Y. GIANTS	...Won, 38-10
Nov. 13	...at San Francisco	...Lost, 21-14
Nov. 20	...WASHINGTON	...Won, 31-7
Nov. 24	...GREEN BAY	...Won, 42-31
Dec. 4	...at Philadelphia	...Won, 31-19
Dec. 10	...CLEVELAND	...Lost, 19-14
Dec. 19	...at New Orleans	...Won, 24-16
Dec. 24	...at N.Y. Giants	...Lost, 15-10
Jan. 8	...GREEN BAY	...Won, 35-9†
Jan. 15	...at San Francisco	...Lost, 38-28#

† — NFC semifinals

— NFC Championship game

(Darrick Brownlow, Matt Vanderbeek, Kenneth Gant) to free agency.

Chris Boniol has an average leg and was 6 for 10 from 40 yards or more. John Jett is in the same class at punter, but Williams is one of the top return men in the game, ranking fourth in kickoffs at 26.7. Last season he returned one kickoff 87 yards for a touchdown and also one punt 83 yards for a score.

RATING: 7

DRAFT

The Cowboys headed south from the 28th pick, not making a selection until Williams at No. 46. Some of the other selections looked like reaches or projections, especially Bowling Green defensive back Charlie Williams, who expressed shock at his third-round status. Offensive line coach Hudson Houck loves Michigan State tackle Shane Hannah, and the entire staff is excited about Mississippi State 305-pound tight end Watkins, who might also play guard, center or fullback.

RATING: 5

COACHING

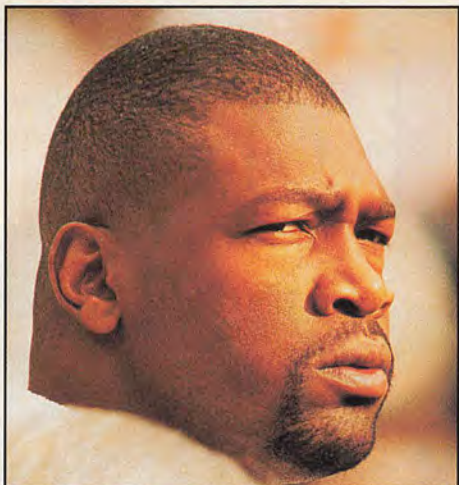
Just before Jerry and Jimmy's highly publicized breakup last year, Jones made the statement that there were 500 coaches who could win a Super Bowl with Dallas' talent.

Make that 499. While Switzer wasn't to be blamed for all the traffic accidents and untimely rash of injuries at the end of last season — namely Smith's hamstring — he didn't deliver the Super Bowl Jones had promised.

Johnson's confident swagger has been replaced by the detached demeanor of Switzer. He lets the assistants coach and the players handle matters that Johnson would have jumped in the middle of. This staff has lost key coordinators in Norv Turner, Dave Wannstedt and Butch Davis the last two seasons.

RATING: 6

Tim Cowlishaw covers the Cowboys for the Dallas Morning News.



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NEW YORK GIANTS

'94 RECORD

9-7 (6-2 in Division)

COACH

Dan Reeves, 3rd season with Giants, 21-13; 138-92-1 overall

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1993 (Lost to 49ers, 44-3, in divisional semifinals)

HOME STADIUM

Giants Stadium, East Rutherford, N.J. (77,311, artificial)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: David Meggett, RB (N.E.); Mike Fox, DT (Car.); Erik Howard, NT (NYJ)

Free-agent signings: Mike Croel, LB (Den.); Ray Agnew, DL (N.E.); Robert Harris, DL (Minn.); Herschel Walker, RB (Phi.); Maurice Douglas, S (Chi.)

Others: Carlton Bailey, LB (released); Venie Glenn, S (trade with Minn.)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Don Blackmon (LBs); Dave Brazil (def. quality control); James Daniel (TEs); Joe DeCamillis (special teams); Steve DeBerg (QBs); Kerry Goode (asst. strength and cond., off. quality control); George Henshaw (off. coord.); Earl Leggett (DL); Pete Mangurian (OL); Al Miller (strength and cond.); Mike Nolan (def. coord.); Dick Rehbein (WRs); George Sefcik (RBs); Zaven Yarialian (DBs).

1995 Schedule

Sept. 4 DALLAS, 9
 Sept. 10 at Kansas City, 1
 Sept. 17 at Green Bay, 1
 Sept. 24 NEW ORLEANS, 1
 Oct. 1 at San Francisco, 4
 Oct. 8 ARIZONA, 4
 Oct. 15 PHILADELPHIA, 1
 Oct. 22 Open Date
 Oct. 29 at Washington, 8
 Nov. 5 at Seattle, 4
 Nov. 12 LOS ANGELES, 1
 Nov. 19 at Philadelphia, 1
 Nov. 26 CHICAGO, 1
 Nov. 30 at Arizona, 8
 Dec. 10 WASHINGTON, 4
 Dec. 17 at Dallas, 4
 Dec. 23 SAN DIEGO, 12:30
 All times Eastern

By JOHN ALTAVILLA

They don't get any more pragmatic than New York Giants General Manager George Young.

He may have lost more than 100 pounds (doctor's orders) over the last 18 months, but he hasn't misplaced his deliberate nature, his desire to sit back and think deeply about contingencies before acting.

And these days, his concentration continues to be focused on the NFL's salary cap.

When the Giants were 3-7 after Week 10 last season, Young wasn't resting well. His critics howled. He'd dumped veteran quarterback Phil Simms in favor of rookie Dave Brown and things just weren't working out.

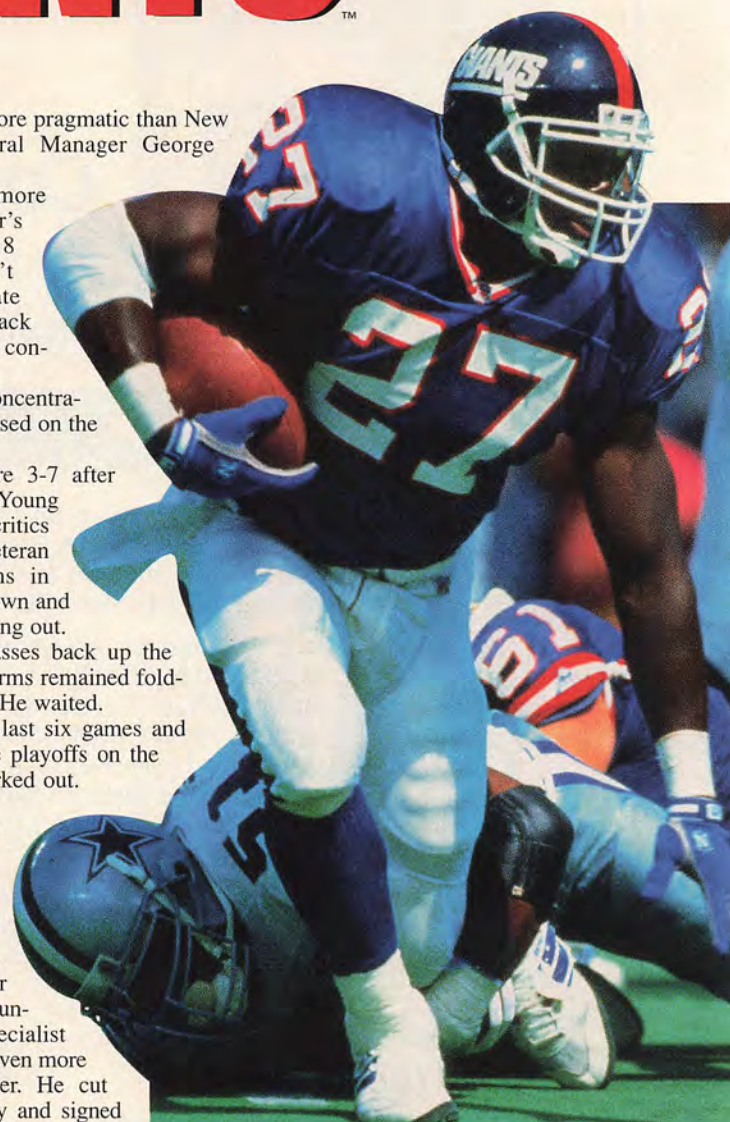
Young pushed his glasses back up the bridge of his nose. His arms remained folded. He snacked on fruit. He waited.

The Giants won their last six games and hung on the edge of the playoffs on the final weekend. It all worked out. Didn't it?

Young has responded to a series of new challenges in such a way that the Giants appear poised to reappear among the NFC's elite. He replaced the major free-agent defection of running back/return specialist David Meggett with the even more versatile Herschel Walker. He cut linebacker Carlton Bailey and signed younger, faster Mike Croel in his place, setting up a potentially dominating unit with Michael Brooks and Corey Miller.

And Young prepared for the possible loss of running back Rodney Hampton to free agency after this season by using his first draft pick on Michigan's Tyrone Wheatley.

But most of all, Young was smart enough three years ago to secure coach Dan Reeves to direct his play. Now, if only the Giants could find themselves a secondary.



Running back Rodney Hampton will be seeking his fifth straight 1,000-yard season.

MILESTONES

- Hampton needs only 459 yards to pass Joe Morris and become the Giants' all-time leading rusher. He should also pass Morris in career carries (Hampton needs 78) and 100-yard games (Hampton needs five). Hampton will also be seeking his fifth straight 1,000-yard season.
- The Giants will try to sweep NFC East rival Washington for the third straight season.

POWER RATING

72

QUARTERBACKS

It took a few weeks — and absorbed a few hits from the sack-happy New York media — but Brown's development into an above-average NFL quarterback was apparent by the end of the season. His numbers (2,536 yards, 57.4 completion percentage, 12 TDs, 16 INTs) weren't Simms superlative, but they steadily improved over the last seven weeks of the season. And now Reeves has brought in quarterbacks coach Steve DeBerg to advise and tutor Brown.

Backup Kent Graham (24 of 53, 295 yards, 3 TDs, 2 INTs) has had his moments, but if he were to be injured, all New York would have as insurance would be second-year pro Stan White, who did not take a snap his rookie season. And that would be ugly.

RATING: 7

RUNNING BACKS

Hampton recorded his fourth straight 1,000-yard season (1,075) in '94, placing him only 459 yards behind the Giants' all-time career rushing leader, Joe Morris. But yards gained are no longer the important numbers relating to Hampton. He enters the final season of his multi-million dollar contract, and reality has motivated the Giants to prepare for his very possible departure. Signing Walker was more a reaction to the loss of Meggett to New England, but even at 33 years old, Walker's Adonis-like body could handle more work.

Enter first-round draft pick (No. 17 overall) Wheatley of Michigan, injury-prone (bad shoulders), but fast enough at 6-feet, 232 pounds to be a Michigan track star, three-time 1,000-yard rusher and preseason Heisman Trophy favorite in '94. Whatever work is left will be fought over between veterans Kenyon Rasheed, Gary Downs and Keith Elias, with rookie sixth-round pick Charles Way of Virginia getting a long look.

RATING: 9

RECEIVERS

Brown's early-season struggles impacted directly on his corps of underutilized receivers. Most of the work done by Mike Sherrard (53 catches, 825 yards, 6 TDs), Chris Calloway (43 catches, 666 yards, 2 TDs) and tight end Howard Cross (31 catches, 364 yards, 4 TDs) was completed after week No. 10, when the Giants were already 3-7. New York's '94 first-round pick, Thomas Lewis, caught only four passes before hurting his ankle. Walker's ability to catch passes (125 over the last two seasons in Philadelphia) will help, but the position remains questionable and vulnerable to injury.

RATING: 6

OFFENSIVE LINE

Only the support pillars of the Brooklyn Bridge have more years on them than the Giants' corps of veteran linemen: Tackles Doug Riesenberger (9th season) and Jumbo Elliott (8th season) and guard William Roberts (11th season). But they've performed just as sturdily, even though they contributed to 46 sacks in '94. Still, as time continues to erode their bodies, New York will

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
93	Ray Agnew	DT	6-3/295	6	N.C. State
98	Jessie Armstead	LB	6-1/228	3	Miami (Fla.)
21	Willie Beamon	CB	5-11/175	3	Northern Iowa
78	Greg Bishop	OT	6-5/295	3	Pacific
77	Chad Bratzke	DE	6-4/262	2	E. Kentucky
94	Michael Brooks	LB	6-1/235	9	LSU
17	Dave Brown	QB	6-5/225	4	Duke
55	Marcus Buckley	LB	6-3/235	3	Texas A&M
80	Chris Calloway	WR	5-10/185	6	Michigan
37	Jesse Campbell	S	6-1/215	5	N.C. State
51	Mike Croel	LB	6-3/240	5	Nebraska
87	Howard Cross	TE	6-5/258	7	Alabama
3	Brad Daluiso	PK	6-2/215	5	UCLA
62	Scott Davis	G	6-3/289	3	Iowa
71	Stacey Dillard	DT	6-5/292	4	Oklahoma
82	Omar Douglas	WR	5-10/170	2	Minnesota
43	Maurice Douglass	S	5-11/203	10	Kentucky
45	Gary Downs	RB	6-0/212	2	N.C. State
20	Keith Elias	RB	5-9/191	2	Princeton
76	Jumbo Elliott	OT	6-7/308	8	Michigan
25	Vencie Glenn	S	6-0/189	10	Indiana State
10	Kent Graham	QB	6-5/236	4	Ohio State
75	Keith Hamilton	DE	6-6/290	4	Pittsburgh
27	Rodney Hampton	RB	5-11/230	6	Georgia
89	Gary Harrell	WR	5-7/170	1	Howard
97	Robert Harris	DE	6-4/290	4	Southern
2	Mike Horan	P	5-11/188	12	Long Beach St.
85	Brian Kozlowski	HB	6-3/250	2	Connecticut
81	Thomas Lewis	WR	6-1/185	2	Indiana
86	Arthur Marshall	WR	5-11/178	4	Georgia
99	Chris Maumalanga	DT	6-2/288	2	Kansas
57	Corey Miller	LB	6-2/255	5	South Carolina
84	Aaron Pierce	TE	6-5/248	4	Washington
23	Thomas Randolph	CB	5-9/176	2	Kansas State
44	Kenyon Rasheed	FB	5-10/235	3	Oklahoma
72	Doug Riesenberger	T	6-5/280	9	California
66	William Roberts	G	6-5/292	11	Ohio State
91	Coleman Rudolph	DE	6-4/270	3	Georgia Tech
67	Adam Schreiber	C	6-4/290	12	Texas
31	Jason Sehorn	S	6-2/212	2	USC
88	Mike Sherrard	WR	6-2/187	10	UCLA
61	Lance Smith	G	6-3/290	11	LSU
22	Phillippi Sparks	CB	5-11/190	4	Arizona State
92	Michael Strahan	DE	6-4/270	3	Texas Southern
34	Herschel Walker	RB	6-1/225	10	Georgia
8	Stan White	QB	6-2/202	2	Auburn
90	Corey Widmer	LB	6-3/250	4	Montana State
59	Brian Williams	C	6-5/300	7	Minnesota
68	Jason Winrow	G	6-4/321	2	Ohio State
29	Tito Wooten	S	6-0/181	2	N.E. Louisiana

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1	Tyrone Wheatley	RB	6-0/232	Michigan
2	Scott Gragg	OT	6-8/305	Montana
3	Rodney Young	DB	6-1/212	LSU
4A	Rob Zatechka	OG	6-4/307	Nebraska
4B	Ben Talley	LB	6-3/241	Tennessee
5	Roderick Mullen	CB	6-2/200	Grambling
6A	Jamaal Duff	DE	6-6/255	San Diego State
6B	Chris Way	RB	6-1/235	Virginia
7	Bryne Diehl	P	6-3/215	Alabama



The Giants rallied behind quarterback Dave Brown to win their final six games.

begin to mix in young veterans like guard Scott Davis and tackle Greg Bishop, and hope draft picks like Montana's Scott Gragg and Nebraska's Rob Zatechka will develop.

RATING: 8

DEFENSIVE LINE

The position is due for significant change, not necessarily a bad thing considering the paltry 26 sacks it helped generate. End Mike Fox signed with Carolina. Veteran Erik Howard (6½ sacks) will continue to play at Giants Stadium, but will do so for the Jets. Perhaps it's time to return to the 3-4 scheme (or play with seven linebackers?) with newcomers Ray Agnew (from New England) and Robert Harris (from Minnesota) pushing Keith Hamilton (6½ sacks) and Mike Strahan (4½ sacks) for work.

RATING: 5

LINEBACKERS

Lawrence Taylor, World Wrestling Federation

Rookie of the Year, is officially history. And so is the overpriced Bailey, released days after the Giants signed Croel, a former NFL Defensive Rookie of the Year, from Denver. Put Croel, Brooks and Miller together and add guys like Corey Widmer, Jessie Armstead and Marcus Buckley for depth, and see why a 3-4 alignment might make more sense.

RATING: 8

SECONDARY

At best, questionable. At worst, disastrous. The sight of receivers flying past New York corners became as common as jets speeding down airport runways, especially when Willie Beamon was in the game. New York needs a lot of help. Starting corner Corey Raymond was lost in the expansion draft (Jacksonville). Veteran Phillippi Sparks can't stay healthy. Thomas Randolph, the best of the '94 rookie crop, must accelerate to All-Pro speed. Safety is a particularly large concern, so the Giants signed free agent Maurice Douglass (Chicago) and traded for Vencie Glenn (Minnesota) to

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	...PHILADELPHIA	..Won, 28-23
Sept. 11	...at Arizona	...Won, 20-17
Sept. 18	...WASHINGTON	..Won, 31-23
Sept. 25	..Open Date	
Oct. 2	...at New Orleans	..Lost, 27-22
Oct. 10	...MINNESOTA	...Lost, 27-10
Oct. 16	...at L.A. Rams	...Lost, 17-10
Oct. 23	...PITTSBURGH	...Lost, 10-6
Oct. 30	...DETROIT	...Lost, 28-25 (OT)
Nov. 7	...at Dallas	...Lost, 38-10
Nov. 13	...ARIZONA	...Lost, 10-9
Nov. 21	...at Houston	...Won, 13-10
Nov. 27	...at Washington	..Won, 21-19
Dec. 4	...at Cleveland	...Won, 16-13
Dec. 11	...CINCINNATI	...Won, 27-20
Dec. 18	...at Philadelphia	..Won, 16-13
Dec. 24	...DALLAS	...Won, 15-10

support Jesse Campbell. Perhaps draft picks Rodney Young and Roderick Mullen will help. Maybe not.

RATING: 4

SPECIAL TEAMS

Brad Daluiso's bionic right foot converted all 11 field-goal attempts, including 10 straight after he finally got the full-time job in Week 13. Can he do it again? Good question. Mike Horan had an unreliable season punting (41.4-yard average), including two blocks, so the Giants used their seventh pick in '95 to take Alabama's Bryne Diehl — just in case. What the Giants lost in punt returns with Meggett (2 TDs), they gained on kickoff returns with Walker. And they feel Lewis can more than make up for Meggett's loss.

RATING: 7

DRAFT

Wheatley's selection was certainly surprising, but if things work out, the team should be adequately prepared in 1996 should Hampton leave. Gragg, who stands 6-8 and weighs 318 pounds, has a size-16 ring finger and potential just as large. Zatechka, a part of Nebraska's incomparable offensive line, is as smart (4.0 in pre-med) as he is strong. Not bad for an inexact science.

RATING: 8

COACHING

He is patient, intelligent, religious and forthright. He gives off the impression of being in total control, so much so you tend to trust the decisions — both personal and technical — that come from his office. The Giants are lucky to have Reeves, one of the NFL's best, and Denver is probably sorry it asked him to leave.

RATING: 10

John Altavilla covers the Giants for the New Haven (Conn.) Register.



ARIZONA CARDINALS

'94 RECORD

8-8 (4-4 in Division)

COACH

Buddy Ryan, 2nd season with Cardinals,
8-8; 51-43-1 overall

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1982 (Lost to Green Bay, 41-16, in wild card game)

HOME STADIUM

Sun Devil Stadium, Tempe, Ariz.
(73,521, grass)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Randal Hill, WR (Mia.); Brian Bollinger, OG (G.B.); James Williams, CB (Car.); Rick Cunningham, OT (Minn.); Keith McCants, LB (St. L.)

Free-agent signings: Dave Krieg, QB (Det.); Patrick Hunter, CB (Sea.); Duval Love, OG (Pitt.)

Others: Rob Moore, WR (acq. in trade with NYJ); Ricky Proehl, WR (traded to Sea.); Ronald Moore, RB (traded to NYJ); Steve Beuerlein, QB (Jack.; left unprotected in expansion draft); Gary Clark, WR (signed with Mia.)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Dave Atkins (off. coord.); Matt Cavanaugh (QBs); Ronnie Jones (def. coord.); George Martinez (RBs); Dan Neal (OL); Ted Plumb (WRs/TEs); Al Roberts (special teams); Rex Ryan (LBs); Rob Ryan (DBs); Jim Stanley (DL)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	at Washington, 4
Sept. 10	PHILADELPHIA, 8
Sept. 17	at Detroit, 1
Sept. 24	at Dallas, 4
Oct. 1	KANSAS CITY, 4
Oct. 8	at N.Y. Giants, 4
Oct. 15	WASHINGTON, 4
Oct. 22	Open Date
Oct. 29	SEATTLE, 4
Nov. 5	at Denver, 4
Nov. 12	MINNESOTA, 4
Nov. 19	at Carolina, 1
Nov. 26	ATLANTA, 4
Nov. 30	N.Y. GIANTS, 8
Dec. 9	at San Diego, 4
Dec. 17	at Philadelphia, 1
Dec. 25	DALLAS, 9

All times Eastern

By STEVE SCHOENFELD

As soon as the final gun sounded last season, Arizona Cardinals owner Bill Bidwill ordered coach Buddy Ryan to upgrade the team's offense, which was 27th in scoring and 25th overall in the NFL.

Ryan must have thought that meant getting rid of nearly every quarterback and wide receiver on his roster, which he did.

Starting quarterback Steve Beuerlein wasn't protected in the expansion draft and went to Jacksonville. His backups, Jay Schroeder and Jim McMahon, hadn't been re-signed as of May 1.

Wide receiver Ricky Proehl was traded to Seattle and Randal Hill and Gary Clark weren't re-signed. Proehl was in Ryan's doghouse from the first game when he dropped a potential game-winning bomb from Beuerlein.

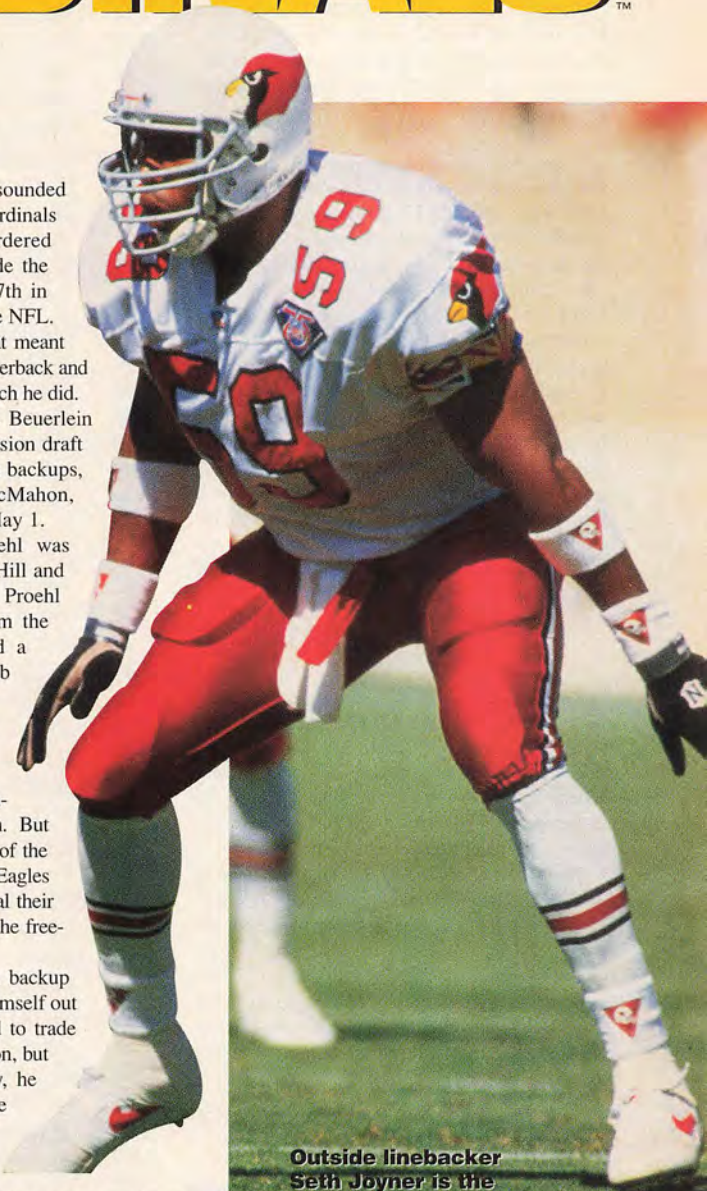
Ryan tried to trade with the Los Angeles Raiders for Jeff Hostetler or with the Philadelphia Eagles for Randall Cunningham to replace Beuerlein. But first-year coaches Mike White of the Raiders and Ray Rhodes of the Eagles decided they didn't want to deal their starters, forcing Ryan to enter the free-agent market.

First, Ryan wanted Atlanta backup Bobby Hebert, but he priced himself out of the running. Then, he tried to trade for Tampa Bay's Craig Erickson, but that deal fell through. Finally, he decided upon 36-year-old Dave Krieg, who had guided the Detroit Lions to a 5-2 record and a playoff berth after replacing the injured Scott Mitchell at midseason.

Ryan also had a rude awakening in trying to get a free-agent receiver. He was so sure he'd beat Tampa Bay for Alvin Harper, formerly of Dallas, he said that "if you can't compete with Tampa Bay, you should get out of the league." Sure enough, the Cards got outbid for Harper by the Buccaneers, but the NFL's oldest continuous franchise didn't turn in its charter.

The Cardinals continued to strike out in free agency. They were outbid by Cleveland for Andre Rison and had an offer sheet for Cincinnati's Carl Pickens matched by the Bengals. But a day before the NFL draft, a desperate Ryan traded his first- and fourth-round picks and running back Ronald Moore to the New York Jets for wide receiver Rob Moore. They overpaid, but also filled their biggest need.

Their other key free-agent acquisitions were offensive guard Duval Love, who earned a Pro Bowl



Outside linebacker Seth Joyner is the leader of Buddy Ryan's "46" defense.

MILESTONES

- ❖ The Cardinals haven't won a playoff game since 1947.
- ❖ They haven't reached the playoffs in a non-strike year since 1975, the longest drought in the league.
- ❖ They haven't had a winning season since 1984.

POWER RATING
66

CARDINALS

berth with the Pittsburgh Steelers last season; offensive tackle Larry Tharpe, whom Ryan paid \$1 million even though he didn't take a snap for the Detroit Lions a year ago, and cornerback Patrick Hunter, formerly of Seattle.

Tharpe, who made the NFL minimum \$165,000 last season, is a Ryan family favorite. He played for Rob Ryan at Tennessee State and his agent is Jim Ryan, the only Ryan son not on the payroll.

QUARTERBACKS

Seven years later, the Cardinals still are trying to replace Neil Lomax, who suffered a career-ending hip injury the first year the team was in Arizona. Now, they've turned to 15-year-veteran Krieg, who has been in the league so long, rookie defensive tackle Chad Eaton, a native of Seattle, got Krieg's autograph when he was 14.

Krieg is coming off one of his most productive seasons. He completed 61 percent of his passes for 1,629 yards and 14 touchdowns and was intercepted only three times. There is little experience behind him, however. Mike Buck, a former New Orleans Saints draft pick who was out of the league last year, is the No. 2 quarterback with rookie Stoney Case, a third-round pick out of New Mexico, in the mix.

RATING: 6

RUNNING BACKS

Garrison Hearst (37 carries, 169 yards in '94) finally is healthy and out of the doghouse. He appears fully recovered from the knee surgery he underwent as a rookie two years ago and is expected to be the team's featured back. He better be.

With Moore traded to the Jets, the team is thin here. Larry Centers, the top receiver a year ago, will start at the other running back spot but also will back up Hearst. Centers set a team record for receptions by a running back (77) last season, second most among running backs in the league. But, since there was almost non-existent depth at the position, he also wore down playing most of the time.

RATING: 7

RECEIVERS

How badly did the Cardinals need to add Moore, whom they paid \$11.2 million over four years? Before he joined them, their top receivers from a year ago had combined for 18 catches. Moore, a 6-foot-3, 205-pound sixth-year pro, had 78 catches for 1,010 yards last season. The Cards then added Frank Sanders of Auburn with their first pick in the draft, a second-round choice. Sanders, 6-1, 202, set a school record with 58 receptions last season. Ryan immediately inserted Moore and Sanders as starters.

"That's what we have them for," Ryan said. "They're both big guys, both of them catch the ball, both of them are fast. We didn't bring them here to watch us play."

Tight end remains the biggest question on the team with converted defensive lineman Wendall Gaines and Chad Fann having little experience.

RATING: 6

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT/WT	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
46	Brent Alexander	DB	5-10/184	2	Tennessee State
63	Michael Bankston	DT	6-3/280	4	Sam Houston St.
73	Sebastian Barrie	DT	6-2/280	3	Liberty
78	Chadrick Brown	DE	6-7/265	3	Mississippi
16	Mike Buck	QB	6-3/227	4	Maine
38	Patrick Burke	CB	5-11/180	1	Fresno City JC
37	Larry Centers	RB	5-11/215	6	Stephen F. Austin
62	Ben Coleman	T	6-6/335	3	Wake Forest
79	Ed Cunningham	C	6-3/285	4	Washington
5	Greg Davis	K	6-0/205	8	The Citadel
93	Karl Dunbar	DE	6-4/275	4	Louisiana State
26	Walter Dunson	RB	5-8/173	1	Middle Tenn. St.
65	Ernest Dye	G	6-6/325	3	South Carolina
83	Anthony Edwards	WR	5-10/190	6	N.M. Highlands
92	Eric England	DE	6-2/283	2	Texas A&M
86	Chad Fann	TE	6-3/250	3	Florida A&M
10	Jeff Feagles	P	6-1/205	8	Miami (Fla.)
89	Wendall Gaines	TE/DT	6-4/293	2	Oklahoma State
49	Eric Gant	FB	6-2/245	1	Grambling State
54	Darryl Hardy	OLB	6-2/230	1	Tennessee
23	Garrison Hearst	RB	5-11/215	3	Georgia
22	Mark Higgs	RB	5-7/199	8	Kentucky
58	Eric Hill	MLB	6-2/255	7	Louisiana State
34	Terry Hoage	WS	6-2/201	12	Georgia
97	Bryan Hooks	DE	6-3/286	1	Arizona State
24	Patrick Hunter	CB	5-11/186	10	Nevada
56	Terry Irving	OLB	6-0/224	2	McNeese State
53	Garth Jax	MLB	6-2/250	10	Florida State
61	Todd Jones	C	6-3/295	3	Henderson State
59	Seth Joyner	OLB	6-2/235	10	Texas-El Paso
57	Randy Kirk	OLB/LS	6-2/231	8	San Diego State
82	Kevin Knox	WR	6-3/195	1	Florida State
17	Dave Krieg	QB	6-1/202	16	Milton
4	Chuck Levy	QB/WR/RB	6-0/197	2	Arizona
67	Duval Love	G	6-3/288	11	UCLA
29	Lorenzo Lynch	SS	5-11/200	9	CS Sacramento
55	Wilber Marshall	OLB	6-1/231	12	Florida
50	David Merritt	OLB	6-1/237	3	North Carolina St.
95	Jamir Miller	OLB	6-4/242	2	UCLA
85	Rob Moore	WR	6-3/205	6	Syracuse
60	Anthony Redmon	G	6-4/308	2	Auburn
80	Bryan Reeves	WR	5-11/195	2	Nevada-Reno
96	Clyde Simmons	DE	6-6/280	10	Western Carolina
98	Eric Swann	DT	6-5/295	5	None
71	Larry Tharpe	T	6-4/299	4	Tennessee State
73	Leroy Truitt	OL	6-4/310	1	Houston
35	Aeneas Williams	CB	5-10/190	5	Southern
94	Bernard Wilson	DT	6-2/295	2	Tennessee State
68	Joe Wolf	G	6-6/296	7	Boston College

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT/WT	SCHOOL
2	Frank Sanders	WR	6-1/202	Auburn
3	Stoney Case	QB	6-2/206	New Mexico
5a	Cedric Davis	CB	5-9/170	Tennessee State
5b	Lance Scott	C	6-3/285	Utah
5c	Tito Paul	DB	6-0/195	Ohio State
6	Anthony Bridges	CB	5-9/181	North Texas
7a	Billy Williams	WR	5-11/175	Tennessee
7b	Wesley Leasy	LB	6-2/234	Mississippi State
7c	Chad Eaton	DT	6-4/292	Washington State



Larry Centers' 77 receptions last season were second best among NFL running backs.

OFFENSIVE LINE

Until the Cardinals signed Love they had the youngest and most inexperienced offensive line in the league, as their per game average of 97.5 rushing yards can attest. Nobody had been starting more than two seasons and center Ed Cunningham was the oldest at 25.

Love, who will start at left guard, is a proven performer who should provide needed leadership. Starting next to him at left tackle will be Ernest Dye, who had rotator cuff surgery on both shoulders in the offseason and likely won't be ready to practice until mid-August.

Ryan hopes Lance Scott, a fifth-round pick from Utah, can eventually provide some depth at center.

RATING: 5

DEFENSIVE LINE

This was the most improved position on the team last season and a big reason why the Cardinals had the league's third-best defense (allowing only 275.5 yards per game). Tackle Eric Swann became a dominant player in Ryan's "46" defense. He had 111 tackles (23 for a loss), 38 quarterback hurries and seven sacks.

End Michael Bankston tied Swann for the team lead in sacks and led all NFL defensive linemen with 138 tackles. The other end, Clyde Simmons, had six sacks, not what you expect from a player earning \$2.9 million a year.

RATING: 8

LINEBACKERS

The Cardinals' linebacking corps is the strength of the team. Outside linebacker Seth Joyner didn't have his typical big statistical year (86 tackles, six sacks and three interceptions), but he still earned his fourth Pro Bowl berth. Eric Hill, who had a team-high 142 tackles, has become one of the league's best middle linebackers. Jamir Miller or second-year pro Terry Irving will replace Wilber Marshall at the other outside linebacker spot. Miller played sparingly last season after signing late, but flashed his potential in the season finale against Atlanta with two sacks, five hurries and one forced fumble.

RATING: 8

SECONDARY

The way to beat the Cardinals' defense last season was to throw at the cornerback playing opposite Pro Bowler Aeneas Williams, who tied Eric Turner of Cleveland for the league-high in interceptions with nine. In the offseason, Ryan signed Hunter to start at the other corner. He should be a big improvement over James Williams, who was benched in midseason for rookie free agent Brent Alexander. With the addition of Hunter, Alexander moves to the starting free safety spot. Lorenzo Lynch, coming off a career-high 140-tackle season, returns at strong safety.

Arizona tied for the NFL lead with 23 interceptions last year.

RATING: 6

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	...at L.A. Rams	...Lost, 14-12
Sept. 11	...N.Y. GIANTS	...Lost, 20-17
Sept. 18	...at Cleveland	...Lost, 32-0
Sept. 25	...Open Date	
Oct. 2	...MINNESOTA	...Won, 17-7
Oct. 9	...at Dallas	...Lost, 38-3
Oct. 16	...at Washington	...Won, 19-16 (OT)
Oct. 23	...DALLAS	...Lost, 28-21
Oct. 30	...PITTSBURGH	...Won, 20-17 (OT)
Nov. 6	...at Philadelphia	...Lost, 17-7
Nov. 13	...at N.Y. Giants	...Won, 10-9
Nov. 20	...PHILADELPHIA	...Won, 12-6
Nov. 27	...CHICAGO	...Lost, 19-16 (OT)
Dec. 4	...at Houston	...Won, 30-12
Dec. 11	...WASHINGTON	...Won, 17-15
Dec. 18	...CINCINNATI	...Won, 28-7
Dec. 24	...at Atlanta	...Lost, 10-6

SPECIAL TEAMS

If the Cardinals can find kick and punt returners, they shouldn't have problems here. Placekicker Greg Davis converted 13 of his last 14 field goals last season, including a franchise-record 13 in a row. Punter Jeff Feagles, a favorite of Ryan's from his Philadelphia days, doesn't kick for distance but is among the leagues' best at nailing kicks inside the 20.

But the Cardinals were the league's worst at returning kickoffs last season and hope free agent Walter Dunson or rookie Billy Williams, a seventh-round pick out of Tennessee, can step in.

RATING: 7

DRAFT

Moore, more or less, made the Cardinals' draft.

"I think we got the best pick in the first round," Ryan said of Moore.

Sanders could start at the other wide receivers spot as a rookie. Case is their quarterback of the future — and the future could become the present before the season is over. They drafted two cornerbacks — Cedric Davis of Tennessee State in the fifth round and Anthony Bridges of North Texas in the sixth — one of whom they hope will become the team's nickel back.

RATING: 7

COACHING

Nobody has ever questioned whether Ryan can coach defense. But he and offensive coordinator Dave Atkins came under fire last year for antiquated offensive play-calling — first down: run second down: run; third down: incomplete pass; fourth down: punt.

That problem dates back to his days as the Eagles' head coach. Ryan, though, vows things will be different now that he has "his guys" on offense. The others he publicly humiliated and then dumped.

RATING: 6

Steve Schoenfeld covers the NFL for the Arizona Republic.



WASHINGTON REDSKINS

'94 RECORD

3-13 (0-8 in Division)

COACH

Norv Turner, 2nd season with Redskins, 3-13

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1992 (Lost to 49ers, 20-13, in divisional semifinals)

HOME STADIUM

RFK Stadium, Washington, D.C.
(56,454, grass)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent signings: Marv Patton, LB (Buff.); Stanley Richard, S (S.D.); Rod Stephens, LB (Sea.); James Washington, S (Dall.)

Free-agent losses: Reggie Roby, P (T.B.); John Friesz, QB (Sea.); Raleigh McKenzie, C (Phi.); Mark Schlereth, G (Den.)

Others: Andre Collins, LB (released, signed with Cin.); Ricky Ervins, RB (not re-signed); Shane Collins, DE (traded to S.F.); Desmond Howard, WR (selected by Jacksonville in expansion draft)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Cam Cameron (QBs); Russ Grimm (TEs); Mike Haluchak (LBs); Jim Hanifan (OL); Bobby Jackson (RBs); Bob Karmelowicz (DBs); Ron Lynn (defensive coordinator); Terry Robiskie (receivers); Pete Rodriguez (special teams)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	.....	ARIZONA, 4
Sept. 10	.....	LOS ANGELES, 1
Sept. 17	.....	at Denver, 4
Sept. 24	.....	at Tampa Bay, 1
Oct. 1	.....	DALLAS, 1
Oct. 8	.....	at Philadelphia, 1
Oct. 15	.....	at Arizona, 4
Oct. 22	.....	DETROIT, 1
Oct. 29	.....	N.Y. GIANTS, 8
Nov. 5	.....	at Kansas City, 1
Nov. 12	.....	Open Date
Nov. 19	.....	SEATTLE, 1
Nov. 26	.....	PHILADELPHIA, 1
Dec. 3	.....	at Dallas, 4
Dec. 10	.....	at N.Y. Giants, 4
Dec. 17	.....	at St. Louis, 1
Dec. 24	.....	CAROLINA, 4
All times Eastern		

By JOHN KEIM

Linebacker Andre Collins flung himself in front of charging fullbacks, smacked into offensive linemen carrying 70-pound advantages and racked up a career-high in tackles a year ago.

For that, the Redskins cut him. Gone, too, is the No. 2 tackler, Tyronne Stowe (released) and the team's leading rusher, Ricky Ervins, a free agent who wasn't offered a contract.

The 230-pound Collins, a five-year starter who signed a one-year \$750,000 contract with the Bengals, wasn't physical enough for the Redskins, who ranked 27th against the run and allowed a team-record 5,609 yards and 412 points. So, the Redskins shopped for size and speed at his position. They think they've found it in Marv Patton (from Buffalo) and Rod Stephens (from Seattle).

The Redskins didn't stop spending there. Free-agent safeties James Washington (Dallas) and Stanley Richard (San Diego) will help. Their tackling and big-play ability excite the Redskins.

"Flag football teams did a better job tackling than we did a year ago," said defensive coordinator Ron Lynn, whose unit recovered only six fumbles in 1994. "But we've upgraded our team speed and we've added better tacklers."

On the flipside, Ervins gained 650 yards, averaging 3.5 yards per carry. He was second on the team with 51 receptions. But Ervins wasn't a playmaker and now the team hopes third-year back Reggie Brooks can return to his rookie form (1,063 yards rushing).

Second-year quarterback Heath Shuler was given a new toy in rookie receiver Michael Westbrook, the team's first-round pick (fourth overall). Washington hopes he makes more of an impact than the last receiver they drafted in the same slot in 1992, former Heisman Trophy winner Desmond Howard, who was selected by Jacksonville in the expansion draft.



Last year's No. 1 pick, quarterback Heath Shuler, should benefit from a full training camp in '95.

MILESTONES

- Henry Ellard is 842 yards shy of becoming the seventh NFL receiver to surpass 12,000 career receiving yards.
- Ellard could move into fifth place on the all-time reception yardage list, surpassing Don Maynard (11,834) and Charlie Joiner (12,146).

POWER RATING

62

QUARTERBACKS

Shuler, the NFL's third pick in the 1994 Draft, held out for 13 days as a rookie and it cost him on the field. Then, when he finally got his chance to start in Week 5 vs. Dallas, Shuler was inconsistent. In his first three starts, he had a quarterback rating of 37.7. A sprained ankle in Week 7 sidelined him for three weeks. When Shuler returned as the starter in Week 12, he cemented his future. He looked more composed, threw crisper passes and used more receivers. Shuler (1,658 yards passing, 10 TDs, 12 INTs) also matured. In his last five starts, his rating was 75.8.

Backup Gus Frerotte (600 yards passing, five touchdowns, five interceptions) established himself as a decent backup. After these two, the position is thin. John Friesz left for Seattle, leaving Trent Green as the front-runner for the No. 3 spot.

RATING: 6

RUNNING BACKS

The popular thinking last year was, if nothing else, the Redskins would be able to run the ball. No one's thinking that this year, not after the team managed just 1,415 yards on the ground in 1994, its lowest total since 1968. Washington rushed for only five touchdowns.

Brooks had a poor offseason in 1994, culminating in a pulled hamstring at the NFL's "Run to Daylight" Challenge in June. It affected his running style and his confidence. He pulled a rib cage muscle in Week 5 and ran the ball only 15 times in the ensuing 10 games.

Brian Mitchell (78 carries, 311 yards) will also battle for the starting job.

RATING: 5

RECEIVERS

Lots of questions here. Can Henry Ellard equal last season's performance? What kind of impact will Westbrook make? And who will start at tight end? Ellard (74 catches, 1,397 yards, six TDs) had a superb year and few receivers run better routes. Only three of his catches failed to produce first downs.

The 6-foot-3 Westbrook gives Shuler a huge target. He has speed (4.5 in the 40) and is strong over the middle, something the Redskins lacked in 1994. Second-year man Tydus Winans (19 catches, 344 yards, two TDs) should emerge as the third receiver.

Tight end is a problem. James Jenkins (eight catches, 32 yards, four touchdowns) is the best blocker of the bunch. Frank Wycheck, suspended Nov. 29 last season for steroid use, has switched from fullback to tight end, his position at Maryland.

RATING: 7

OFFENSIVE LINE

True to Redskins tradition, this should remain a strength. Jim Hanifan's crew is versatile, though it lost depth when Raleigh McKenzie and Mark Schlereth bolted for Philadelphia and Denver, respectively.

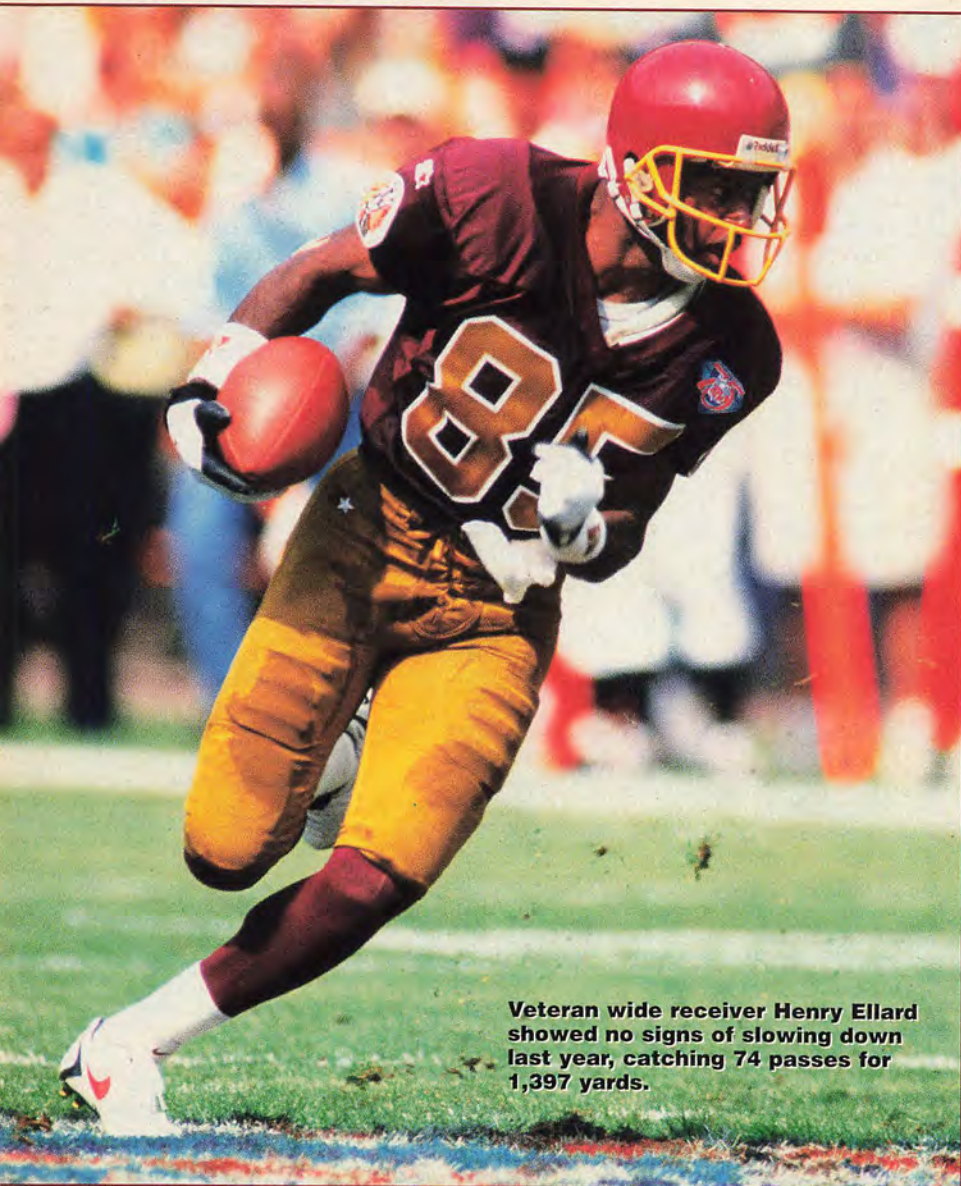
Left tackle Jim Lachey isn't as dominant as he once was, but he's still among the league's best. He had knee surgery two years ago and missed

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
95	Anthony Abrams	DT	6-4/298	1	Clark
56	Erick Anderson	LB	6-1/240	4	Michigan
87	Coleman Bell	TE	6-2/243	1	Miami (Fla.)
36	William Bell	RB	5-11/212	2	Georgia Tech
93	Marc Boutte	DT	6-4/311	4	LSU
40	Reggie Brooks	RB	5-8/211	3	Notre Dame
67	Ray Brown	G	6-5/312	10	Arkansas State
50	Darrick Brownlow	LB	6-0/260	5	Illinois
25	Tom Carter	CB	6-0/181	3	Notre Dame
85	Henry Ellard	WR	5-11/185	13	Fresno State
55	Brad Fichtel	C	6-2/285	3	Eastern Illinois
12	Gus Frerotte	QB	6-2/221	2	Tulsa
63	John Gesek	C	6-5/282	9	CS-Sacramento
26	Alan Grant	CB	5-10/187	6	Stanford
28	Darrell Green	CB	5-8/180	13	Texas A&M
10	Trent Green	QB	6-3/212	2	Indiana
57	Ken Harvey	LB	6-2/245	8	California
73	Don Henson	T	6-5/297	1	Sam Houston State
88	James Jenkins	TE	6-2/241	5	Rutgers
78	Tim Johnson	DT	6-3/286	9	Penn State
77	Tre' Johnson	T	6-2/338	2	Temple
62	Alai Kalanluvalu	G	6-3/302	1	Oregon State
59	P.J. Killian	LB	6-2/240	1	Virginia
79	Jim Lachey	T	6-6/294	11	Ohio State
20	Marc Logan	FB	6-0/212	8	Kentucky
8	Chip Lohmiller	K	6-3/215	8	Minnesota
64	Trevor Matich	C	6-4/297	11	BYU
72	Lamar Mills	DT	6-5/307	2	Indiana
30	Brian Mitchell	FB	5-10/221	6	SW Louisiana
38	Darryl Morrison	S	5-11/200	2	Arizona
80	Patrick Newman	WR	6-0/209	5	Utah State
92	Dexter Nottage	DE	6-4/290	2	Florida A&M
41	Mohammad Oliver	DB	5-11/185	4	Oregon
97	Sterling Palmer	DE	6-5/277	3	Florida State
68	Joe Patton	G	6-5/288	2	Alabama A&M
53	Marcus Patton	LB	6-2/240	6	UCLA
24	Richard Stanley	S	6-2/197	5	Texas
39	Tyrone Rush	RB	5-11/201	2	North Alabama
23	Sebastian Savage	S	5-10/187	1	North Carolina St.
86	Leslie Shepherd	WR	5-11/189	2	Temple
5	Heath Shuler	QB	6-2/221	2	Tennessee
76	Ed Simmons	T	6-5/325	9	E. Washington
34	Cedric Smith	FB	5-10/237	4	Florida
61	Vernice Smith	G	6-3/298	7	Florida A&M
99	Rod Stephens	LB	6-1/237	7	Georgia Tech
6	Kent Sullivan	P	6-0/202	3	Cal Lutheran
27	Keith Taylor	S	5-11/212	7	Illinois
19	Doug Thomas	WR	5-11/178	3	Clemson
48	Ernie Thompson	FB	6-0/260	1	Indiana
84	Olanda Truitt	WR	6-0/186	3	Mississippi State
1	Matt Turk	P	6-5/230	1	Wis.-Whitewater
91	Matt Vanderbeek	LB	6-3/243	7	Michigan State
37	James Washington	S	6-1/209	8	UCLA
94	Bobby Wilson	DT	6-2/307	5	Michigan State
83	Tydus Winans	WR	5-11/180	2	Fresno State
98	Tony Woods	DE	6-4/282	9	Pittsburgh
89	Frank Wycheck	TE	6-3/247	3	Maryland

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT/WT	SCHOOL
1	Michael Westbrook	WR	6-3/215	Colorado
2	Cory Raymer	C	6-2/293	Wisconsin
3	Darryl Pounds	CB	5-10/177	Nicholls State
4	Larry Jones	RB	6-0/244	Miami (Fla.)
5	Jamie Asher	TE	6-3/243	Louisville
5a	Rich Owens	DE	6-6/255	Lehigh
6	Brian Thure	T	6-5/300	Oklahoma
7	Scott Turner	CB	5-10/178	Illinois



Veteran wide receiver Henry Ellard showed no signs of slowing down last year, catching 74 passes for 1,397 yards.

the last two games of 1994 with a lacerated calf muscle, but has recovered. Ray Brown will start at left guard and John Gesek is at center.

Second-year man Tre' Johnson, a quick 338-pounder, will start at right guard, despite being drafted as a tackle. The Redskins like him next to tackle Ed Simmons, who is coming off what Hanifan called his best year since 1990.

RATING: 7

DEFENSIVE LINE

Stopping the run is a must in the NFC East, but the Redskins didn't get much help up front in the offseason.

Coaches hope the offseason workouts of the holdovers combined with another year under Bob Karmelowicz will pay dividends. It better. End Tony Woods (81 tackles, 4.5 sacks) had a good year and Tim Johnson is fine at tackle. But neither warrants much double-teaming. End Sterling Palmer has increased his weight from 256 pounds to 277 after a season some called his best ever.

RATING: 4

LINEBACKERS

Ken Harvey (career-high 13.5 sacks) had a Pro Bowl season in 1994, doing a little of everything. He was shifted all over the field, often lining up at end in pass-rush situations. He'll do so again, but this time he has better talent around him. Patton replaces Collins and Stephens ousted middle linebacker Stowe.

Collins made plays, picking off four passes and returning two for touchdowns. But his size and contract (it called for \$1.5 million in 1995) made him expendable.

This group will tackle better and will have more speed in coverage. Stephens was a three-down player in Seattle and has been compared to former Redskin standout Neal Olkewicz, but with more speed.

RATING: 8

SECONDARY

The Redskins are in much better shape here than a year ago. James Washington was snatched from Dallas and Stanley Richard, last seen chas-

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	SEATTLE	Lost, 28-7
Sept. 11	at New Orleans	Won, 38-24
Sept. 18	at N.Y. Giants	Lost, 31-23
Sept. 25	ATLANTA	Lost, 27-20
Oct. 2	DALLAS	Lost, 34-7
Oct. 9	at Philadelphia	Lost, 21-17
Oct. 16	ARIZONA	Lost, 19-16 (OT)
Oct. 23	at Indianapolis	Won, 41-27
Oct. 30	PHILADELPHIA	Lost, 31-29
Nov. 6	SAN FRANCISCO	Lost, 37-22
Nov. 13	Open Date	
Nov. 20	at Dallas	Lost, 31-7
Nov. 27	N.Y. GIANTS	Lost, 21-19
Dec. 4	at Tampa Bay	Lost, 26-21
Dec. 11	at Arizona	Lost, 17-15
Dec. 18	TAMPA BAY	Lost, 17-14
Dec. 24	at L.A. Rams	Won, 24-21

ing Jerry Rice in the Super Bowl, was reunited with Lynn, his one-time coach in San Diego.

Cornerback Darrell Green, entering his 13th season, was re-signed. He's still among the fastest in the game. The other corner, Tom Carter, is inconsistent. He has the athletic ability, but seemingly shies away from physical play.

RATING: 7

SPECIAL TEAMS

Pro Bowl punter Reggie Roby escaped to Tampa Bay via free agency and that will hurt. Ace cover man Johnny Thomas fled to Cleveland.

Fortunately, Mitchell didn't leave. Mitchell set five Redskins special teams records including most combined punt and kickoff return yardage in a season (1,930) — an NFL record.

Placekicker Chip Lohmiller struggled early, but regained his touch and finished with a .714 field-goal percentage, matching his career best. Matt Turk or Kent Sullivan will replace Roby. Turk has never punted in the NFL while Sullivan has 24 career punts.

RATING: 6

DRAFT

Washington had so many holes to fill, it couldn't go wrong with its first pick. While many lamented not getting a defensive lineman, few argue over Westbrook's abilities. Cory Raymer, the second-round choice, was the best center in the draft. But he's not a certain starter like Westbrook.

RATING: 6

COACHING

Turner is an upbeat person, which is important in a rebuilding job such as this. Players enjoy playing for Turner. But they lost eight games after leading at halftime. Was it because of the rookie coach or the personnel? Since the latter has been upgraded, we'll soon find out.

RATING: 6

John Keim covers the Redskins for the Fairfax (Va.) Journal.



PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

'94 RECORD

7-9 (3-5 in Division)

COACH

Ray Rhodes, 1st season with Eagles

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1992 (Lost to Cowboys, 34-10, in conf. semifinals)

HOME STADIUM

Veterans Stadium, Philadelphia, Pa. (65,178, artificial)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Eric Allen, CB (N.O.); Britt Hager, LB (Den.); James Joseph, RB (Cin.); Bryan Barker, P (Jack.); Bubby Brister, QB (NYJ); Rodney Peete, QB (Dall.)

Free-agent signings: Ricky Watters, RB (S.F.); Kevin Turner, RB (N.E.); Rhett Hall, DT (S.F.); Raleigh McKenzie, OG (Wash.); Joe Sims, OT (G.B.)

Others: Herschel Walker, RB (released, signed with NYG); Broderick Thompson, OT (released, signed with Den.); William Perry, DT (retired); Victor Bailey, WR (traded to K.C.)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Bill Callahan (OL); Gerald Carr (WRs); Juan Castillo (off. assistant); Jon Gruden (off. coord.); Dick Jamieson (RBs); Chuck Knox, Jr. (def. assistant); Danny Smith (special teams); Emmitt Thomas (def. coord.); Mike Trgovac (DL); Joe Vitt (LBs); Ted Williams (TEs); Mike Wolf (strength and conditioning)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	TAMPA BAY, 1
Sept. 10	at Arizona, 8
Sept. 17	SAN DIEGO, 1
Sept. 24	at Los Angeles, 4
Oct. 1	at New Orleans, 1
Oct. 8	WASHINGTON, 1
Oct. 15	at N.Y. Giants, 1
Oct. 22	Open Date
Oct. 29	ST. LOUIS, 1
Nov. 6	at Dallas, 9
Nov. 12	DENVER, 8
Nov. 19	N.Y. GIANTS, 1
Nov. 26	at Washington, 1
Dec. 3	at Seattle, 4
Dec. 10	DALLAS, 1
Dec. 17	ARIZONA, 1
Dec. 24	at Chicago, 1
All times Eastern	

By DAVE CALDWELL

What is it with Ray Rhodes anyway? You would think the first-year coach of the Philadelphia Eagles would be delighted just to have his own NFL team after 15 years as an assistant.

You would think Rhodes would be delirious that owner Jeffrey Lurie has pretty much handed him the authority of rebuilding a football team that disintegrated before coach Rich Kotite was fired and sent back to the Jets.

You would think he'd be ecstatic that no one is expecting a whole lot from the Eagles this year.

Think again.

Keep looking at Rhodes, the 44-year-old former defensive coordinator of the world champion San Francisco 49ers, and you will see a man who hardly ever smiles. He thinks that the 1995 Eagles are not only better than the '94 Eagles team that lost its last seven games and crash-landed to a 7-9 record, but can challenge for an NFC East championship right away. No joke.

"I want to win now," he said after the NFL draft. "I want to win this year. I know the expectations from the media and the press is that we might be able to do this or do that. Hey, man. I'm going to prove everybody wrong, because I'm going to get it done."

That sounds like mighty wishful thinking. But if his much-maligned veteran quarterback can pick up the team's new San Francisco-style offense, and a retooled offensive line can provide some blocking, Rhodes' team might just win as many games as it loses. That would be an accomplishment in itself.

QUARTERBACKS

About two minutes into his first news conference as Eagles' coach in February, Rhodes announced that Randall Cunningham would be his starting quarterback. The news came as a mild shock. The 32-year-old veteran is coming off a dreadful season in which he finished 18th among NFL quarterbacks in passing efficiency, was benched by Kotite in favor of Bubby Brister with two games left in the season, and was regarded by angry Eagles' fans as the main reason for the team's demise.

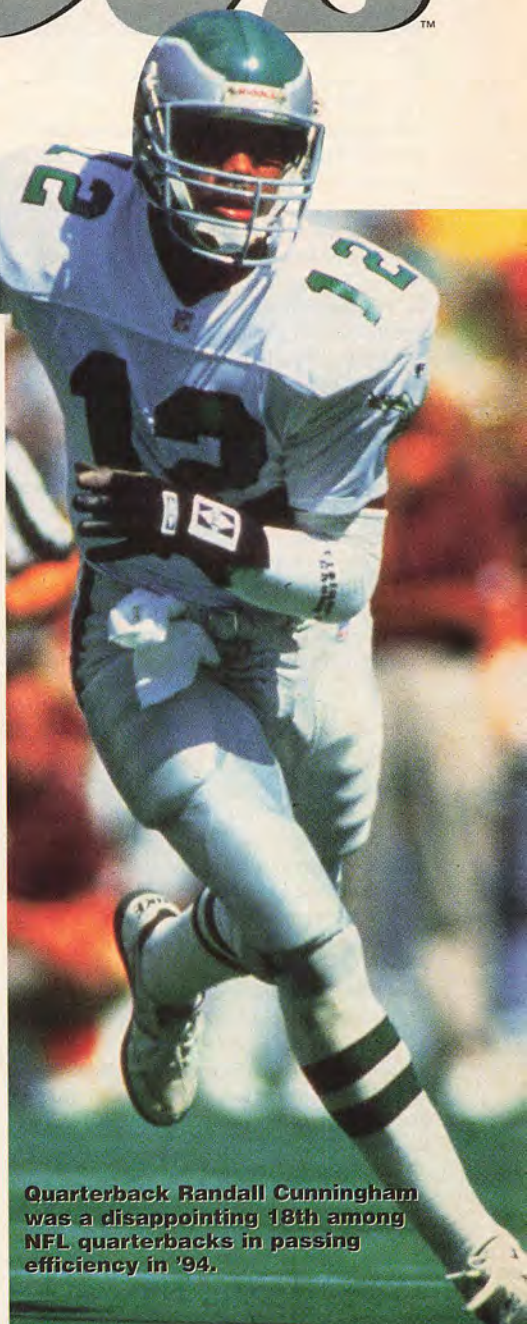
Cunningham has been grateful for the reprieve. And he thinks he'll prosper in the team's new offense, which, like the 49ers' famous attack, features shorter, crisper routes, quicker reads and many more options.

STONESTONES

• Randall Cunningham needs to throw for 4,692 yards this year to replace Ron Jaworski as the Eagles' No. 1 career passer. Cunningham has 22,272 yards; Jaworski, who played for the Eagles from 1977-'86, had 26,963 yards.

POWER RATING
60

Quarterback Randall Cunningham was a disappointing 18th among NFL quarterbacks in passing efficiency in '94.



Simply not having Kotite and Brister around may be enough for Cunningham to play better. Veteran Rodney Peete will back up Cunningham.

RATING: 7

RUNNING BACKS

What better way to install a San Francisco-style offense than by signing the ultimate San Francisco-style running back?

Rhodes and Lurie put together a creative three-year, \$6.9-million offer — which included an astounding \$3.5 million guaranteed in the first year — to lure restricted free agent Ricky Watters, who was last seen helping the 49ers to an easy victory over San Diego in Super Bowl XXIX. Watters, a native of nearby Harrisburg, Pa., thinks he will carry the ball 20 to 25 times a game in Philadelphia. It is more likely that Watters' job will be similar to the one he filled in San Francisco, which calls for him to carry the ball about 15 times and catch about four passes a game as a dangerous receiver out of the backfield.

Watters' new blocking back is Kevin Turner, a restricted free agent who played the last three years for the Patriots. Turner was slowed by an abdominal pull last year and finished with only 111 yards rushing. But the Eagles were willing to pay Turner \$4.125 million over three years because he can catch the ball (52 receptions last year) and open holes for Watters much like William Floyd did in 'Frisco.

RATING: 7

RECEIVERS

Reggie Johnson is the Eagles' new tight end. He is also the Eagles' biggest free-agent gamble. Johnson started only two games and caught only seven passes as a backup last year in Green Bay — 14 fewer than the unspectacular Maurice Johnson, last year's starter in Philadelphia. After falling short in their attempt to lure Jay Novacek to Philadelphia, however, the Eagles paid Johnson an astounding \$2.75 million over three years.

Five-year veteran Fred Barnett and Calvin Williams still make a fine pair of wideouts. Barnett had 78 catches last year; Williams had 58. Rookie Chris T. Jones from Miami (Fla.) will try to replace Victor Bailey (traded to the Chiefs) as the team's third wide receiver.

RATING: 7

OFFENSIVE LINE

Cunningham might need all the short routes, quick reads and passing options he can get. The Eagles' offensive line might be the shakiest unit on the entire team.

Raleigh McKenzie, the former Redskin, was signed to start over steady David Alexander at center. Expected to start at the guard positions are Lester Holmes, the relentless third-year pro from Jackson State, and Joe Panos, the second-year pro from Wisconsin who started the final two games last year.

The tackle positions are much less settled. Antone Davis, the passive 335-pounder from Tennessee, flopped at left guard last year and was switched back to right tackle, where he had

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT/WT	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
72	David Alexander	C	6-3/285	9	Tulsa
24	Corey Barlow	CB	5-9/186	3	Auburn
86	Fred Barnett	WR	6-0/200	6	Arkansas State
71	Mike Chalenski	DL	6-5/285	3	UCLA
12	Randall Cunningham	QB	6-4-205	11	UNLV
78	Antone Davis	T	6-4/335	5	Tennessee
56	Byron Evans	LB	6-2/235	9	Arizona
83	Bernard Ford	WR	5-9/182	3	Florida-Central
23	Derrick Frazier	CB	5-10/172	3	Texas A&M
95	William Fuller	DE	6-3/280	10	North Carolina
30	Charlie Garner	RB	5-9/187	2	Tennessee
54	Kurt Gouveia	LB	6-1/240	9	Brigham Young
96	Mark Gunn	DT	6-4/297	4	Pittsburgh
97	Rhett Hall	DT	6-2/276	3	California
91	Andy Harmon	DT	6-4/278	5	Kent State
20	Vaughn Hebron	RB	5-8/195	3	Virginia Tech
26	Jerome Henderson	CB	5-10/188	4	Clemson
73	Lester Holmes	G	6-3/305	3	Jackson State
66	John Hudson	G/C	6-2/276	6	Auburn
47	Greg Jackson	S	6-1/204	7	LSU
98	Tommy Jeter	DT	6-5/285	4	Texas
87	Maurice Johnson	TE	6-2/240	5	Temple
80	Reggie Johnson	TE	6-2/255	5	Florida State
52	Vaughan Johnson	LB	6-3/240	10	N.C. State
18	Ron Lewis	WR	5-11/192	6	Florida State
62	Raleigh McKenzie	G/C	6-2/283	11	Tennessee
68	Tom McHale	T	6-4/290	9	Cornell
29	Mark McMillian	CB	5-7/148	4	Alabama
3	Eddie Murray	K	5-11/190	16	Tulane
58	Derrick Oden	LB	5-11/237	3	Alabama
63	Joe Panos	G/C	6-2/293	2	Wisconsin
9	Rodney Peete	QB	6-0/225	7	USC
42	Mike Reid	S	6-1/222	3	N.C. State
94	Leonard Renfro	DT	6-2/306	3	Colorado
53	Bill Romanowski	LB	6-4/241	8	Boston College
75	Rob Selby	G	6-3/293	5	Auburn
68	Joe Sims	T/G	6-3/310	5	Nebraska
93	Daniel Stubbs	DE	6-4/272	7	Miami (Fla.)
85	Jeff Sydnor	WR	5-6/177	4	Hawaii
51	William Thomas	LB	6-2/223	5	Texas A&M
34	Kevin Turner	FB	6-1/231	4	Alabama
32	Ricky Watters	RB	6-1/217	5	Notre Dame
48	Barry Wilburn	CB	6-2/195	7	Mississippi
14	Jeff Wilkins	K	6-1/190	2	Youngstown St.
74	Bernard Williams	T	6-8/286	2	Georgia
89	Calvin Williams	WR	5-11/187	6	Purdue
57	Marc Woodard	LB	6-0/238	2	Mississippi St.
27	Eric Zomalt	SS	5-11/201	2	California
36	Michael Zordich	S	6-1/212	9	Penn State

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT/WT	SCHOOL
1	Mike Mamula	DE	6-4/252	Boston College
2	Bobby Taylor	CB	6-3/216	Notre Dame
2a	Barrett Brooks	T	6-4/309	Kansas State
3	Greg Jefferson	DE	6-3/257	Central Florida
3a	Chris T. Jones	WR	6-3/209	Miami (Fla.)
4	Dave Barr	QB	6-3/205	California
6	Fred McCrary	RB	5-11/215	Mississippi State
7a	Kevin Bouie	T	6-4/309	Mississippi State
7b	Howard Smothers	T	6-3/278	Bethune-Cookman



Fred Barnett caught 78 passes for the Birds last season.

flopped for three years before. Joe Sims, who started 15 games for the Packers at right tackle, signed a two-year, \$1.3 million contract to either replace Alexander or play left tackle instead of '94 first-round disappointment Bernard Williams, who was shopped around before the draft.

RATING: 4

DEFENSIVE LINE

William Fuller, the solid nine-year vet, is back at left end. He slipped during the second half of last season, posting only 1.5 of his team-high 9.5 sacks. Returning at left tackle is 278-pound Andy Harmon, who finished with 100 tackles and nine sacks last year and would have surely made the Pro Bowl had the Eagles finished stronger.

Rhett Hall, who backed up Dana Stubblefield and Bryant Young in San Francisco last year, is the new right tackle. Mike Mamula, the No. 1 draft pick from Boston College, is probably the new right end. The Eagles traded up in the draft to get the 252-pound Mamula, who could wind up at outside linebacker before the year is through. Rhodes simply loves Mamula's fury.

RATING: 6

LINEBACKERS

Byron Evans said in March that he hoped his bro-

ken right leg and torn right medial collateral ligament will have healed in time for his ninth pro season. Rhodes did not seem to be willing to take a chance on that. After the coach let free-agent linebacker Britt Hager skip off to the Broncos, Rhodes fashioned three stop-gap plans at middle linebacker if Evans was unable to return. He signed veteran Kurt Gouveia, who played for new defensive coordinator Emmitt Thomas in Washington. Rhodes also made sure to get plenty of mini-camp repetitions for Derrick Oden, the two-year vet from Alabama who has five tackles in his pro career.

Should Mamula be unable to fend off 300-pound tackles, Bill Romanowski could be moved inside, with Mamula taking Romanowski's place at left outside linebacker. The only sure thing about the 'backers is that William Thomas, coming off a season in which he registered 126 tackles and made six sacks, will play right outside linebacker.

RATING: 5

SECONDARY

Eric Allen, who made the Pro Bowl five times in his seven seasons as an Eagle, signed with the Saints as a transition free agent. This is not a small hole to fill. Allen left the Eagles with 34 interceptions, equaling the club record set by Bill Bradley.

The Eagles signed former Bills defensive back Jerome Henderson, but he is not exactly seen as another Allen. Derrick Frazier, a third-year play-

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	at New York Giants . . .	Lost, 28-23
Sept. 12	CHICAGO	Won, 30-22
Sept. 18	GREEN BAY	Won, 13-7
Sept. 25	Open Date	
Oct. 2	at San Francisco . . .	Lost, 40-8
Oct. 9	WASHINGTON	Won, 23-17
Oct. 16	at Dallas	Lost, 24-13
Oct. 23	HOUSTON	Won, 21-6
Oct. 30	at Washington	Won, 31-29
Nov. 6	ARIZONA	Won, 17-7
Nov. 13	CLEVELAND	Lost, 26-7
Nov. 20	at Arizona	Lost, 12-6
Nov. 27	at Atlanta	Lost, 28-21
Dec. 4	DALLAS	Lost, 31-19
Dec. 11	at Pittsburgh	Lost, 14-3
Dec. 18	N.Y. GIANTS	Lost, 16-13
Dec. 24	at Cincinnati	Lost, 33-30

er from Texas A&M, has played sparingly as an Eagle. Second-round draft choice Bobby Taylor is seen as a prospect, but he dropped in the draft after his work habits were questioned. Put any of them with Mark McMillian, the 5-foot-7 left cornerback, and you have a secondary just waiting to get picked on.

RATING: 5

SPECIAL TEAMS

Eddie Murray, the 39-year-old kicker, converted all 33 of his PATs and 21 of 25 field goals. But Bryan Barker, who finished first among NFC punters with a 36.3-yard net average, signed a free-agent contract with Jacksonville. The Eagles could not work a draft-day trade to net Todd Sauerbrun, the punting prodigy from West Virginia.

Herschel Walker, now with the Giants, will be missed most as a kick returner. He was second in the NFC with a 27.7-yard average. Jeff Sydnor and Vaughn Hebrun will try to take his place.

RATING: 6

DRAFT

The Eagles gave up a lot to get Mamula and Taylor. How these two play will generally determine how Rhodes' first draft will be judged. Barrett Brooks, the team's second-round draft pick, is a 309-pound offensive tackle from Kansas State who was considered by some to be a first-round pick.

RATING: 7

COACHING

Although he was not Lurie's first, second or even third choice, Rhodes is one determined guy who has lured an impressive list of free agents into town. But Rhodes has never been more than a coordinator. Will impatient Eagles fans cut him any slack if Cunningham is ineffective again and the defense yields chunks of yards?

Maybe. But not for long.

RATING: 6

Dave Caldwell covers the Eagles for the Philadelphia Inquirer.

NFC CENTRAL

PREDICTED ORDER OF FINISH

POWER RATING

1. GREEN BAY PACKERS	75
2. MINNESOTA VIKINGS	74
3. DETROIT LIONS	71
4. CHICAGO BEARS	70
5. TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS	58



Brett Favre,
Green Bay

JOE'S PLAYOFF PICKS

PACKERS: Brett Favre proved last year that he can get the job done, but the big question in Packerland is how much he will miss Sterling Sharpe. I think they'll be able to spread the ball around more, and they might actually add better balance to the offense.

VIKINGS: The offense will be better now that Warren Moon has settled in. The real task in Minnesota falls on the shoulders of defensive coordinator Tony Dungy. Can he plug up the holes in the secondary and replace lineman Henry Thomas?

LIONS: Any team that features a home-run hitter like Barry Sanders is dangerous. The question is whether the Lions can survive a hellacious early season schedule.

FINAL '94 STANDINGS	OVERALL	DIV.	PF	PA
MINNESOTA VIKINGS	10-6	5-3	356	314
GREEN BAY PACKERS	9-7	6-2	382	287
DETROIT LIONS	9-7	4-4	357	342
CHICAGO BEARS	9-7	3-5	271	307
TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS	6-10	2-6	251	351

PLAYOFF RESULTS

Wild Card Round

Green Bay 16, Detroit 12

Chicago 35, Minnesota 18

NFC Divisional Semifinals

San Francisco 44, Chicago 15

Dallas 35, Green Bay 9



GREEN BAY PACKERS

'94 RECORD

10-8 (6-2 in Division, 1-1 in playoffs)

COACH

Mike Holmgren, 4th season with Packers, 27-21

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1994 (Lost to Cowboys, 35-9, in divisional semifinals)

HOME STADIUM

Lambeau Field, Green Bay, Wis.
(59,543, natural grass)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Bryce Paup, LB (Buff.); Corey Harris, WR (Sea.); Ed West, TE, (Ind.); Don Davey, DE (Jack.); Joe Sims, T (Phi.)

Free-agent signings: Jerry Crafts, T (Buff.); Brian Bollinger, G (Ariz.)

Others: Mark Ingram, WR (trade from Mia.); Keith Jackson, TE (trade from Mia.); Terrell Buckley, CB (trade to Mia.); Sterling Sharpe, WR (released); Mark Brunell, QB (trade to Jack.); Reggie Cobb, RB (selected by Jack. in exp. draft); Marcus Wilson, RB (selected by Jack. in exp. draft)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Sherman Lewis (off. coord.); Fritz Shurmur (def. coord.); Steve Mariucci (QBs); Gil Haskell (WRs); Harry Sydney (RBs); Larry Brooks (DL); Jim Lind (LBs); Bob Valesente (DBs); Nolan Cromwell (special teams); Johnny Holland (def. asst.)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	ST. LOUIS, 1
Sept. 11	at Chicago, 9
Sept. 17	N.Y. GIANTS, 1
Sept. 24	at Jacksonville, 8
Oct. 1	Open Date
Oct. 8	at Dallas, 1
Oct. 15	DETROIT, 1
Oct. 22	MINNESOTA, 1
Oct. 29	at Detroit, 1
Nov. 5	at Minnesota, 1
Nov. 12	CHICAGO, 1
Nov. 19	at Cleveland, 1
Nov. 26	TAMPA BAY, 1
Dec. 3	CINCINNATI, 1
Dec. 10	at Tampa Bay, 8
Dec. 16	at New Orleans, 4
Dec. 24	PITTSBURGH, 1

All times Eastern

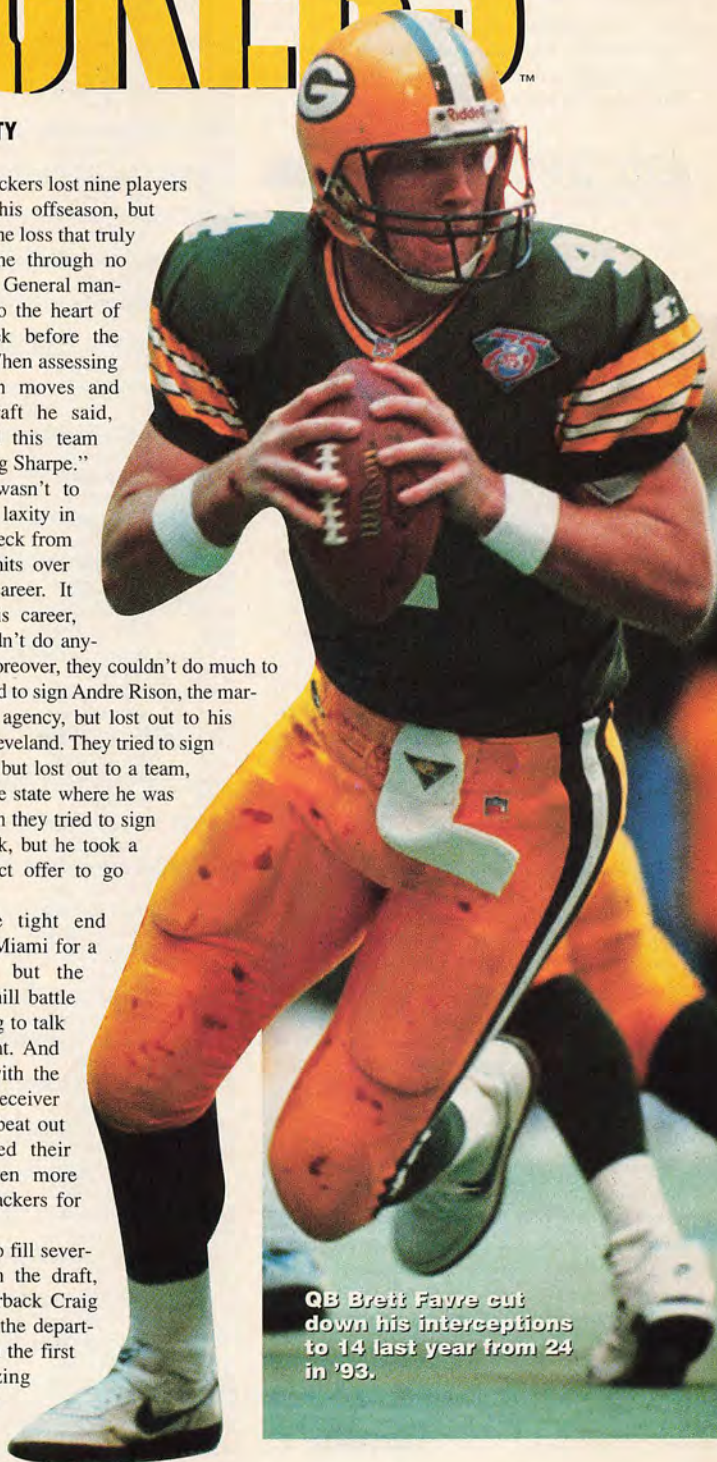
By PETE DOUGHERTY

The Green Bay Packers lost nine players to free agency this offseason, but there was only one loss that truly mattered, and it came through no mistake on their part. General manager Ron Wolf got to the heart of that matter the week before the NFL draft in April. When assessing the team's offseason moves and prospects in the draft he said, "Imagine how good this team would be with Sterling Sharpe."

The Sharpe loss wasn't to free agency, but to a laxity in the ligaments in his neck from an accumulation of hits over his entire football career. It probably will end his career, and the Packers couldn't do anything to prevent it. Moreover, they couldn't do much to replace him. They tried to sign Andre Rison, the marquee receiver in free agency, but lost out to his childhood favorite, Cleveland. They tried to sign tight end Eric Green, but lost out to a team, Miami, that was in the state where he was building a home. Then they tried to sign tight end Jay Novacek, but he took a slightly lower contract offer to go back to Dallas.

They did acquire tight end Keith Jackson from Miami for a second-round pick, but the Packers faced an uphill battle all summer just trying to talk him out of retirement. And they tried to trade with the New York Jets for receiver Rob Moore, but got beat out when Arizona topped their deal and proved even more desperate than the Packers for help at receiver.

Wolf did manage to fill several key holes through the draft, taking starting cornerback Craig Newsome to replace the departed Terrell Buckley in the first round, and bulldozing fullback William Henderson early in the third round.



QB Brett Favre cut down his interceptions to 14 last year from 24 in '93.

MILESTONES

❖ The Packers won't play in Milwaukee for the first time since 1933. They have decided from here on to play all home games at Green Bay's Lambeau Field.

❖ White still is the NFL's all-time sack leader with 145 in 153 games. He also has not missed a non-strike game in his career.

POWER RATING 75

But in the end, they hadn't done much more than spin their wheels from the playoff team they have been the past two years.

They still have Brett Favre, who is fast becoming a premier quarterback, and the indomitable Reggie White anchoring their defense. But compared to the two dominating teams in the NFC, Dallas and San Francisco, they lacked offensive weapons last season. They do even moreso now without Sharpe, especially if they can't sign Jackson.

QUARTERBACKS

Favre blossomed in the second half of last season into one of the few bright young stars in the NFL at his position. The 25-year-old has been courageous, creative and strong-armed ever since he became their starter in 1992. He completed 60 percent of his passes in the final nine games and threw 24 touchdown passes during that stretch. After throwing 24 interceptions in '93, he finished with only 14 last year.

The only problem is, Sharpe was far and away Favre's favorite target, catching 314 passes the past three seasons. More impressively, Sharpe broke Don Hutson's 32-year-old team record by catching 18 touchdown passes last season.

Favre got better last year at finding other receivers, and the Packers are counting on his continued improvement to pick up a lot of the slack.

Ty Detmer (6-0, 186) assumes the job as backup after sharing it last season with Mark Brunell. The Packers traded the promising Brunell to Jacksonville for third- and fifth-round draft picks. T.J. Rubley and rookie Jay Barker of Alabama will battle for the No. 3 position.

RATING: 9

RUNNING BACKS

They didn't want to mortgage their draft for a shot at Colorado's Rashaan Salaam, a possible big-play back. So instead they improved their running game by moving Edgar Bennett from fullback to their feature position at halfback, and then drafted a power blocker at fullback to open holes for him. Henderson was an every-other down player at North Carolina, but is 245 pounds and helped two tailbacks gain more than 700 yards each for the Tar Heels last season.

Bennett, meanwhile, had 623 yards rushing last season and probably will become a 1,000-yard rusher this year now that he'll get the ball more. He also is a threat as a receiver, having caught 78 passes last season. Second-year pro Dorsey Levens will share time with Henderson at fullback. LeShon Johnson is the fastest back the Packers have had in years but had reconstructive knee surgery at the end of last season and won't be ready for contact until early in the regular season.

RATING: 7

RECEIVERS

If Jackson decides to play after all, the Packers at least will have one of the NFL's premier receiving tight ends. Robert Brooks, a fourth-year pro who probably will become Favre's No. 1 target, should improve on his 58 receptions last season. The Packers acquired Mark Ingram from Miami after he had back-to-back 40-reception seasons, and he

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
51	Tuineau Alipate	LB	6-2/245	2	Washington State
48	Mike Bartrum	TE	6-4/243	2	Marshall
34	Edgar Bennett	RB	6-0/224	4	Florida State
61	Brian Bollinger	G	6-5/290	4	North Carolina
9	Dirk Borgognone	K	6-2/225	1	Pacific
87	Robert Brooks	WR	6-0/175	4	South Carolina
71	Gary Brown	T	6-4/290	2	Georgia Tech
93	Gilbert Brown	DT	6-2/330	3	Kansas
36	LeRoy Butler	S	6-0/197	6	Florida State
54	Bernard Carter	LB	6-0/237	1	East Carolina
28	Pat Chaffey	FB	6-1/225	4	Oregon State
89	Mark Chmura	TE	6-5/245	4	Boston College
77	Jerry Crafts	T	6-6/350	4	Louisville
45	Keith Crawford	CB	6-2/188	2	Howard Payne
11	Ty Detmer	QB	6-0/186	4	Brigham Young
29	Rickey Dixon	S	5-11/184	7	Oklahoma
72	Earl Dotson	T	6-3/310	3	Texas A&M
33	Doug Evans	CB	6-0/188	3	Louisiana Tech
78	Tommy Fagan	DE	6-5/265	1	Northeast Louisiana
4	Brett Favre	QB	6-2/222	5	Southern Mississippi
76	Harry Galbreath	G	6-1/285	8	Tennessee
58	Ruffin Hamilton	LB	6-1/230	2	Tulane
91	Bernardo Harris	LB	6-2/238	1	North Carolina
17	Craig Hentrich	P	6-3/200	2	Notre Dame
26	Chauncey Hogan	CB	6-0/180	1	Southern
46	Reggie Holt	S	5-11/202	1	Wisconsin
70	Charles Hope	G	6-3/303	2	Central State (Ohio)
67	Paul Hutchins	T	6-4/335	3	Western Michigan
82	Mark Ingram	WR	5-11/194	9	Michigan State
13	Chris Jacke	K	6-0/200	7	Texas-El Paso
88	Keith Jackson	TE	6-2/258	8	Oklahoma
42	LeShon Johnson	RB	5-11/200	2	Northern Illinois
96	Sean Jones	DE	6-7/275	12	Northeastern
80	Charles Jordan	WR	5-10/175	3	Long Beach
64	John Jurkovic	NT	6-2/290	4	Eastern Illinois
53	George Koonce	LB	6-1/240	4	East Carolina
94	Bob Kuberski	DE/DT	6-4/295	1	Navy
97	Matt LaBounty	DE	6-3/268	3	Oregon
16	Brad Lamb	WR	5-10/175	4	Anderson University
25	Dorsey Levens	RB	6-1/235	2	Georgia Tech
22	Lenny McGill	CB	6-1/194	2	Arizona State
60	Gene McGuire	C	6-4/300	3	Notre Dame
62	Guy McIntyre	G	6-3/275	12	Georgia
85	Terry Mickens	WR	6-0/200	2	Florida A&M
81	Anthony Morgan	WR	6-1/195	5	Tennessee
39	Mike Prior	S	6-0/215	10	Illinois State
12	T.J. Rubley	QB	6-3/205	4	Tulsa
75	Ken Ruettgens	T	6-6/290	11	Southern California
38	Brian Satterfield	FB	6-0/215	1	North Alabama
27	Mike Saunders	RB	5-11/212	1	Iowa
19	Bill Schroeder	WR	6-1/195	1	Wisconsin-La Crosse
59	Wayne Simmons	LB	6-2/245	3	Clemson
18	Milt Stegall	WR	6-0/185	4	Miami (Ohio)
55	Fred Strickland	LB	6-2/250	8	Purdue
73	Aaron Taylor	G	6-4/300	2	Notre Dame
31	George Teague	S	6-1/190	3	Alabama
49	Jeff Thomason	TE	6-4/245	3	Oregon
74	Keith Wagner	T	6-4/300	1	Abilene Christian
23	Sammy Walker	CB	5-11/200	5	Texas Tech
92	Reggie White	DE	6-5/295	11	Tennessee
24	Russell White	RB	5-11/220	2	California
98	Gabe Wilkins	DT/DE	6-4/300	2	Gardner-Webb
95	Jerrold Williams	LB	6-4/240	7	Purdue
56	James Willis	LB	6-1/238	3	Auburn
83	Jeff Wilner	TE	6-4/250	2	Wesleyan (Conn.)
52	Frank Winters	C	6-3/290	9	Western Illinois

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1	Craig Newsome	CB	6-2/185	Arizona State
3a	Darius Holland	DT	6-1/303	Colorado
3b	William Henderson	FB	6-2/245	North Carolina
3c	Brian Williams	LB	6-2/238	USC
3d	Antonio Freeman	WR	6-1/185	Virginia Tech
4	Jeff Miller	T	6-4/300	Mississippi
5a	Jay Barker	QB	6-2/215	Alabama
5b	Travis Jervey	RB	5-2/219	The Citadel
6	Charlie Simmons	WR	6-3/215	Georgia Tech
7	Adam Timmerman	G	6-4/289	South Dakota St.



Reggie White
added eight
sacks to his
all-time leading
total (145) last
season.

probably will start opposite Brooks. Anthony Morgan (28 receptions) also will contribute. But you just don't replace a Sterling Sharpe.

RATING: 6

OFFENSIVE LINE

The line didn't lose many games for the Packers last season but didn't win many either. Starting right tackle Joe Sims signed with Philadelphia, but he was the weakest of the starters. The key addition is Aaron Taylor, the No. 1 pick in '94 who didn't play as a rookie after suffering a season-ending knee injury in June minicamp. He appears to be at full strength and should soon become their best lineman.

If guard Guy McIntyre re-signs, Taylor will replace Sims. If not, he'll play left guard and Paul Hutchins, who is surprisingly nimble at 330-plus pounds, will play right tackle. Ken Ruetters is as solid as ever at left tackle going into his 11th season.

RATING: 7

DEFENSIVE LINE

White (eight sacks) is showing few signs of slowing down at age 33, though he says he will retire when his contract runs out after the '96 season. Sean Jones, 32, wasn't dominating last season but led the team with 10.5 sacks. Second-year pro Gabe Wilkins was moved from end to tackle this year and could start, and 330-pound tackle Gilbert

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	... MINNESOTA	... Won, 16-10
Sept. 11	... MIAMI	... Lost, 24-14
Sept. 18	... at Philadelphia	... Lost, 13-7
Sept. 25	... TAMPA BAY	... Won, 30-3
Oct. 2	... at New England	... Lost, 17-16
Oct. 9	... L.A. RAMS	... Won, 24-17
Oct. 20	... at Minnesota	... Lost, 13-10 (OT)
Oct. 31	... at Chicago	... Won, 33-6
Nov. 6	... DETROIT	... Won, 38-30
Nov. 13	... N.Y. JETS	... Won, 17-10
Nov. 20	... at Buffalo	... Lost, 29-20
Nov. 24	... at Dallas	... Lost, 42-31
Dec. 4	... at Detroit	... Lost, 34-31
Dec. 11	... CHICAGO	... Won, 40-3
Dec. 18	... ATLANTA	... Won, 21-17
Dec. 24	... at Tampa Bay	... Won, 34-19
Dec. 31	... DETROIT	... Won, 16-12*
Jan. 8	... at Dallas	... Lost, 35-9#

* NFC Wild Card Game
NFC Semifinals

Brown will provide a rock in the middle when he returns early in the season from knee surgery.

RATING: 8

LINEBACKERS

The only key loss the Packers suffered in free (continued on page 150)

You won't find a stadium with a roof on top, you won't see a field of plastic grass that is immune to dirt and mud. Packers fans everywhere know the game of football was meant to be played the way the Packers play. And if last season was any indication, the Packers' return to glory is closer than you think.

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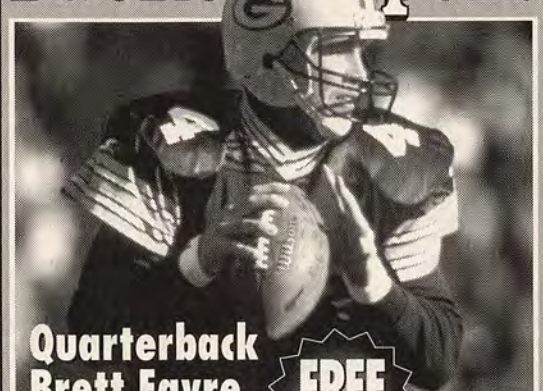
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MINNESOTA VIKINGS

'94 RECORD

10-7 (5-3 in Division, 0-1 in playoffs)

COACH

Dennis Green, 4th season with Vikings, 30-18

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1994 (Lost to Chicago, 35-18, in NFC Wild Card game)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Robert Harris, DE (NYG); Henry Thomas, DT (Det.); Bobby Abrams, LB (N.E.); Todd Scott, S (NYJ); Carlos Jenkins, LB (St.L.); Anthony Parker, CB (St.L.)

Free-agent signings: Harlon Barnett, S (N.E.); Jeff Brady, LB (T.B.); Pat Cunningham, T (Ariz.); Donald Frank, DB (L.A.); Charles Mincy, S (K.C.); Tom Sims, NT (Ind.); Broderick Thomas, LB (Det.)

Others: Dave Garnett, LB (selected by Car. in exp. draft); Eric Guliford, WR (selected by Car. in exp. draft); William Sims, LB (selected by Car. in exp. draft)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Mark Asanovich (assistant strength and conditioning); Brian Billick (offensive coordinator); Tony Dungy (defensive coordinator); Foge Fazio (ILBs); Chris Foerstar (TEs/assistant OL); Carl Hargrave (RBs); John Levra (DL); Chip Myers (WRs); Keith Rowen (OL); Ray Sherman (QBs); Richard Solomon (DBs); Trent Walters (OLBs); Steve Wetzel (strength and conditioning); Gary Zauner (special teams)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	at Chicago, 4
Sept. 10	DETROIT, 1
Sept. 17	DALLAS, 8
Sept. 24	at Pittsburgh, 1
Oct. 1	Open Date
Oct. 8	HOUSTON, 1
Oct. 15	at Tampa Bay, 1
Oct. 22	at Green Bay, 1
Oct. 30	CHICAGO, 9
Nov. 5	GREEN BAY, 1
Nov. 12	at Arizona, 4
Nov. 19	NEW ORLEANS, 4
Nov. 23	at Detroit, 12:30
Dec. 3	TAMPA BAY, 1
Dec. 9	CLEVELAND, 12:30
Dec. 18	at San Francisco, 9
Dec. 24	at Cincinnati, 1
All times Eastern	

By BRUCE BENNETT

Dennis Green spent last year shoring up Minnesota's offense, bringing in quarterback Warren Moon and re-organizing the offensive line. This year's task is the defense.

"That's where our improvement has to come," Green said. "Last year, we had seven new starters on offense. This year, we could have six or seven new starters on defense."

The Vikings were fairly solid against the run last year, but they were vulnerable to the pass, both in terms of a pass rush and when the ball was in the air.

The defense lost one Thomas, but added another. Defensive tackle Henry Thomas went to Detroit as a free agent and Detroit outside linebacker Broderick Thomas landed in Minnesota. Broderick Thomas, a solid pass rusher, will supplant departed Carlos Jenkins at strong side linebacker and is big enough to play effectively opposite tight ends.

Esera Tuaolo and No. 1 draft choice Derrick Alexander figure to start on the defensive line and the Vikings virtually cleaned house in the secondary, leaving last year's rookie right corner, Dewayne Washington, as the only holdover.

The Vikings have made the playoffs in each of Green's three seasons as coach. They also haven't gotten past the first game each year. Is that a hang up?

"It's not a hang up," he insisted. "Our pattern has been a fast start and a strong finish. What we've got to do is smooth out the middle of the season. Maybe because we're not as big or whatever, but we seem to wear down in October and November. We want to maintain a better consistency from start to finish."

"If we're fortunate enough to make the playoffs — and we expect to, that's our objective — we think we can do a lot better if we maintain a consistent level of play throughout the season."

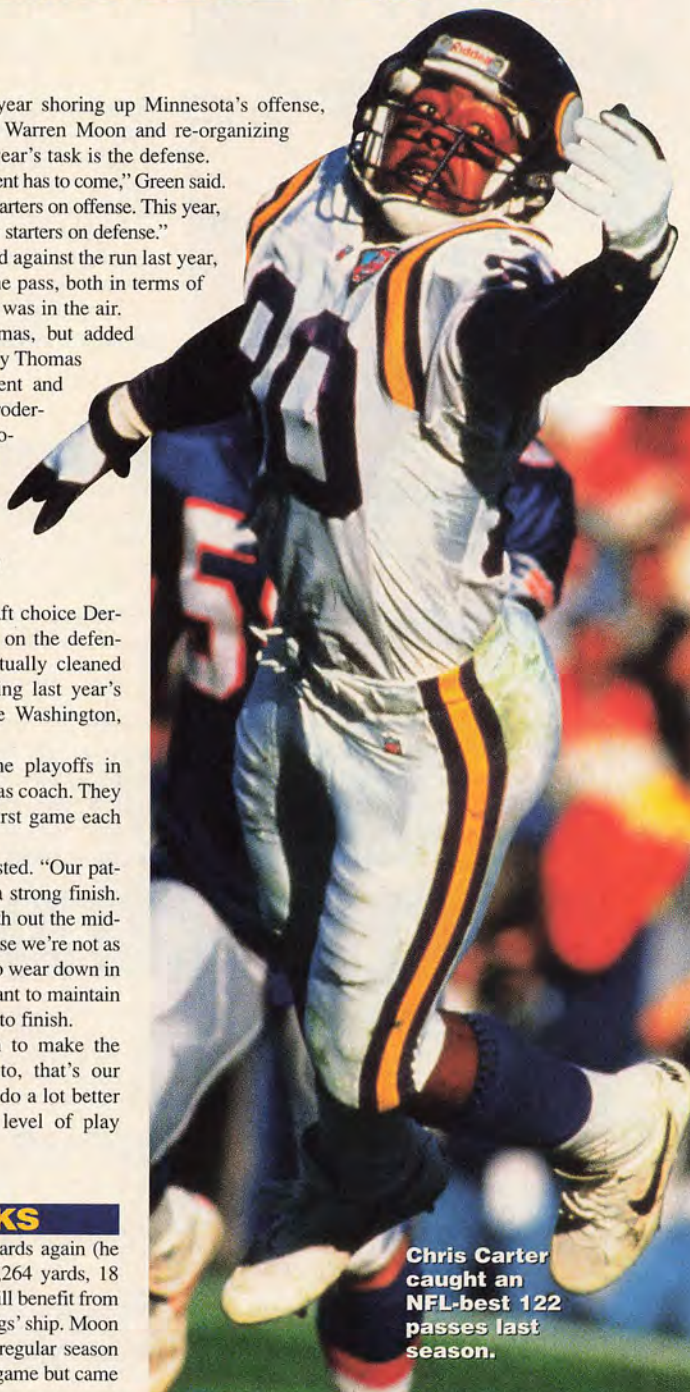
QUARTERBACKS

Moon should pass for 4,000 yards again (he was 371 of 601 passing for 4,264 yards, 18 TDs and 19 INTs in '94) and will benefit from a year's experience in the Vikings' ship. Moon hurt a knee in the next-to-last regular season game last year, missed the last game but came

MINNESOTA VIKINGS

- ❖ Fuad Reveiz enters the season with a string of 28 straight field goals, one shy of the NFL record set by John Carney of San Diego in 1992-'93.
- ❖ Warren Moon has passed for 37,949 yards, sixth on the all-time list, and should move past Johnny Unitas (40,239) into fifth place this season.
- ❖ Dennis Green can become only the fourth coach in NFL history to lead his team into the playoffs in each of his first four years as coach.

POWER RATING
74



Chris Carter caught an NFL-best 122 passes last season.

back in the playoffs. Seldom-used Brad Johnson, starting his fourth season with the team, and strong-armed rookie Chad May are the backups.

Johnson played for London in the World League of American Football in the spring to gain game experience. Green likes the toughness and competitiveness of fourth-round pick May of Kansas State.

RATING: 9

RUNNING BACKS

Despite rushing for 1,031 yards last season, Terry Allen and his \$1.5 million salary were cut in May. Minnesota is concerned that Allen would have difficulty running on two surgically repaired knees. The Vikings are hoping former No. 1 draft pick Robert Smith has a breakthrough year. The one-time Ohio State Buckeye has been utilized mostly as a kick returner his first two seasons, averaging 26.2 yards per return last year.

Amp Lee, Scottie Graham and Chuck Evans are also holdovers and rookie James Stewart of Miami (Fla.) is the "big back" in the stable. Lee, a former Florida State star, is to be counted on heavily. The Vikings' front office rewarded his 11-catch, 159-yard effort in the playoffs by quadrupling his salary. He's an outstanding third-down back.

Green expects improvement in the running game and has beefed up the offensive line in hopes of providing it.

RATING: 6

RECEIVERS

The Vikings have the best tandem of wide receivers, statistically speaking, in the league. Cris Carter (122 receptions) and Jake Reed (85) set an NFL single-season record for combined catches (207) by a starting tandem in 1994. Carter is the team's best athlete and highest-paid player. He caught seven touchdown passes and had two two-point conversion receptions last year.

Speedster Qadry Ismail (45 catches, 696 yards) is blossoming into a dependable deep threat from the three-wide set. Tight end Andrew Jordan, a sleeper as a sixth-round draft choice a year ago, had 35 receptions and Adrian Cooper had 32 in 12 games before going out with an injury.

RATING: 10

OFFENSIVE LINE

Randall McDaniel remains one of pro football's top guards. Todd Steussie started every game as a rookie and alongside McDaniel last year at left tackle. The Vikings will restructure the right side of their line, moving Chris Hinton from tackle to guard, where he was an All-Pro in 1993. Replacing him at tackle will be former Cardinals starter Rick Cunningham, signed as a free agent, or first-round draft pick Corey Stringer. Tackle Everett Lindsay, who missed all of 1994 following shoulder surgery, could shift to center and push holdover Jeff Christy for playing time. The Vikings use a lot of double-tight end and H-back formations, with Cooper, Jordan and utility man John Gerak in key roles.

RATING: 8

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
63	Keith Alex	G	6-4/307	2	Texas A&M
92	Roy Barker	DE	6-4/285	4	North Carolina
42	Harlon Barnett	S	5-11/200	6	Michigan State
56	Pete Bercich	LB	6-1/236	1	Notre Dame
96	Frank Boudreaux	DT	6-5/263	2	Northwestern
36	Malik Boyd	CB	5-10/176	2	Southern
50	Jeff Brady	LB	6-1/238	5	Kentucky
52	Richard Brown	LB	6-3/240	7	San Diego State
8	Jeff Buffalo	P	6-1/194	1	Memphis State
80	Cris Carter	WR	6-3/202	9	Ohio State
62	Jeff Carter	C	6-3/290	3	Pittsburgh
87	Adrian Cooper	TE	6-5/268	5	Oklahoma
67	Rick Cunningham	T	6-6/307	5	Texas A&M
75	Bernard Dafney	G	6-5/329	4	Tennessee
55	Jack Del Rio	LB	6-4/246	11	USC
71	David Dixon	G	6-5/354	2	Arizona State
29	Charles Evans	FB	6-1/232	3	Clark
37	Donald Frank	CB	6-0/192	6	Winston-Salem St.
46	John Gerak	TE	6-3/284	3	Penn State
31	Scottie Graham	RB	5-9/217	3	Ohio State
24	Robert Griffith	S	5-11/189	2	San Diego State
23	Shelly Hammonds	S	5-10/182	1	Penn State
99	James Harris	DE	6-6/255	3	Temple
91	Martin Harrison	DE	6-5/240	5	Washington
78	Chris Hinton	G	6-4/300	13	Northwestern
82	Qadry Ismail	WR	6-0/191	3	Syracuse
25	Alfred Jackson	CB	6-0/185	5	San Diego State
14	Brad Johnson	QB	6-5/220	4	Florida State
35	Chris Johnson	S	6-0/205	1	San Diego State
53	Donald Jones	LB	6-0/232	3	Washington
89	Andrew Jordan	TE	6-4/262	2	W. Carolina
3	Jay Kirchoff	K	6-4/198	1	Arizona
32	Amp Lee	RB	5-11/196	4	Florida State
61	Everett Lindsay	G/C	6-4/301	3	Mississippi
58	Ed McDaniel	LB	5-11/231	4	Clemson
64	Randall McDaniel	G	6-3/274	8	Arizona State
33	Charles Mincy	S	5-11/197	5	Washington
1	Warren Moon	QB	6-3/219	12	Washington
68	Mike Morris	C	6-5/277	9	NE Missouri State
74	Royce Nelson	T	6-4/315	2	Nicholls State
22	David Palmer	WR	5-8/167	2	Alabama
93	John Randle	DT	6-1/272	6	Texas A&M
86	Jake Reed	WR	6-3/217	5	Grambling
7	Fuad Reveiz	K	5-11/227	11	Tennessee
65	Mike Ruether	C	6-4/286	10	Texas
4	Mike Saxon	P	6-3/205	11	San Diego State
59	Ashley Sheppard	LB	6-3/241	3	Clemson
94	Thomas Sims	DT	6-2/291	6	Pittsburgh
95	Fernando Smith	DE	6-6/276	2	Jackson State
26	Robert Smith	RB	6-0/197	3	Ohio State
41	Robert Staten	FB	5-11/240	1	Jackson State
73	Todd Steussie	T	6-6/304	2	California
51	Broderick Thomas	LB	6-4/242	7	Nebraska
98	Esera Tuaolo	DT	6-2/263	5	Oregon State
81	Chris Walsh	WR	6-1/193	3	Stanford
20	Dewayne Washington	CB	5-11/189	2	N.C. State

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1a	Derrick Alexander	DE	6-4/276	Florida State
1b	Korey Stringer	T	6-4/332	Ohio State
2a	Orlanda Thomas	S	6-1/209	SW Louisiana
2b	Corey Fuller	CB	5-10/197	Florida State
4	Chad May	QB	6-1/219	Kansas State
5	James Stewart	RB	6-2/245	Miami (Fla.)
6	John Solomon	LB	6-3/233	Sam Houston State
7a	Jose White	DT	6-3/261	Howard
7b	Jason Fisk	DT	6-3/286	Stanford



Quarterback Warren Moon (37,949 yards) should join the NFL's exclusive 40,000-yard passing club this season.

DEFENSIVE LINE

Defensive tackle John Randle led the NFC and tied for second in the NFL in sacks last season with 13.5. He is the Vikings' featured defender after sharing that role with Henry Thomas. A replacement is needed for Thomas, with Tuaoilo slated to get the first shot.

Improved pass rushing from the defensive ends is a must. Returning starters Roy Barker and James Harris had just 6.5 sacks between them. This is a pivotal year for Barker at left end. Will he become another Hall of Famer like Carl Eller or a bust like Al Noga? First pick Alexander will push Harris. Fernando Smith, a second-round choice in '94, could be factor at end, too.

RATING: 7

LINEBACKERS

Jack Del Rio (team-leading 185 tackles in '94) is solid in the middle and Ed McDaniel (171 tackles, 13 for a loss) is making his mark on the weak side. Broderick Thomas was signed to play the strong side; he has better size and is a better pass rusher than his predecessor, Jenkins.

"He's a guy that plays every single down, both the run and the pass," Vikings coach Dennis Green said when the club signed Thomas to a three-year deal believed to be worth \$5.8 million. "He'll line up on the outside, can hold the tight end, defends the run extremely well and

can pass rush from that outside position, which will bring us the capability of blitzing a little bit more than we have in the past."

The depth is good, with third-year player Ashley Sheppard ready to contribute.

RATING: 7

SECONDARY

There will be sweeping changes here. Washington, who returned two of his three interceptions for touchdowns last year, is the only returning starter at right corner. Harlon Barnett, a free-agent signee from the Patriots, takes over at strong safety, with Charles Mincy (signed from Kansas City) and rookie Orlanda Thomas competing at free safety to replace Vencie Glenn. Glenn, a starter last year, was practically given away to the New York Giants for a sixth-round draft choice. Holdover reserve Malik Boyd and newcomers Alfred Jackson, Donald Frank and rookie Corey Fuller are at left corner. Improved play at every position is a must for this team to contend.

RATING: 5

SPECIAL TEAMS

Both placekicker Fuad Reveiz (34 of 39 FGA, 132 points) and punter Mike Saxon had solid seasons and return. Reveiz enters the season with a string of 28 straight field goals, one shy of

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	...at Green Bay	...Lost, 16-10
Sept. 11	...DETROIT	...Won, 10-3
Sept. 18	...at Chicago	...Won, 42-14
Sept. 25	...MIAMI	...Won, 38-35
Oct. 2	...at Arizona	...Lost, 17-7
Oct. 10	...at N.Y. Giants	...Won, 27-10
Oct. 20	...GREEN BAY	...Won, 13-10
Oct. 30	...at Tampa Bay	...Won, 36-13
Nov. 6	...NEW ORLEANS	...Won, 21-20
Nov. 13	...at New England	...Lost, 26-20
Nov. 20	...N.Y. JETS	...Lost, 31-21
Nov. 27	...TAMPA BAY	...Lost, 20-17
Dec. 1	...CHICAGO	...Won, 33-27
Dec. 11	...at Buffalo	...Won, 21-17
Dec. 17	...at Detroit	...Lost, 41-19
Dec. 26	...SAN FRANCISCO	...Won, 21-14
Jan. 1	...CHICAGO	...Lost, 35-18*

* NFC Wild Card game

the NFL record set by John Carney of San Diego in 1992-'93. Saxon is a seasoned holder on field goals and extra points, and the team has one of the league's top long snappers in Mike Morris. Kick coverage improved slightly last year over 1993 but still has a way to go.

Smith and Ismail are breakaway threats on kick-off returns, and Minnesota could benefit if diminutive David Palmer develops as a punt returner.

RATING: 8

DRAFT

With two picks in each of the top two rounds, Minnesota resisted the opportunities to trade choices and came up with four potential starters. Alexander and Stringer should be in the opening-game lineup and Thomas could be, too. Alexander's impact on the defensive line will always be compared to that of Warren Sapp in Tampa Bay, because the Vikes could have picked the former Miami (Fla.) star. Scouts liken Thomas' ability to that of former Viking star Joey Browner. Fuller said the Vikings didn't draft him to sit on the bench or to be a backup.

What will make this draft special for Minnesota is if May proves to be the successor to Moon in time and Stewart contributes as a ball carrier and receiver.

RATING: 7

COACHING

For the second straight year, Green's staff has undergone major revisions: Tyrone Willingham left to become Stanford's head coach; Monte Kiffin fled to New Orleans to become its defensive coordinator; and receivers coach Jerry Rhome is now the offensive coordinator in Houston. Green figures he has lined up capable replacements and cites the heavy turnover on San Francisco and Dallas staffs as not having hurt those teams. What he has to do now is get this team to play at the 49ers-Cowboys level.

RATING: 7

Bruce Bennett covers the Vikings for the Duluth (Minn.) Herald.



DETROIT LIONS

'94 RECORD

9-8 (4-4 in Division, 0-1 in playoffs)

COACH

Wayne Fontes, 7th season with Lions, 52-53

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1994 (Lost to Green Bay, 16-12, in NFC Wild Card game)

HOME STADIUM

Pontiac Silverdome, Pontiac, Mich.
(80,500, artificial)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Dave Krieg, QB (Ariz.); Mel Gray, RB/KR (Hou.); Kelvin Pritchett, DE (Jack.); Broderick Thomas, LB (Minn.); Marc Spindler, DE (T.B.); Larry Tharpe, T (Ariz.)
Free-agent signings: Don Majkowski, QB (Ind.); Zefross Moss, T (Ind.); Henry Thomas, NT (Minn.); Mark Royals, P (Pitt.)
Others: Derrick Moore, RB (traded to S.F.); Harry Colon, DB (selected by Jack. in exp. draft); Mark Rodenhauser, C (selected by Car. in exp. draft); Larry Ryans, WR (selected by Car. in exp. draft)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Paul Boudreau (OL); Don Clemons (OLBs); John Fontes (DBs); Mo Forte (RBs); Bert Hill (strength and cond./defensive asst.); Steve Kazor (TEs); Greg Landry (QBs); Dave Levy (asst. head coach); Tom Moore (offensive coord.); Frank Novak (special teams); Herb Paterra (defensive coord.); Charlie Sanders (WRs); John Teerlinck (asst. head coach-defense/DL); Howard Tippet (LBs)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3 at Pittsburgh, 1
Sept. 10 at Minnesota, 1
Sept. 17 ARIZONA, 1
Sept. 25 SAN FRANCISCO, 9
Oct. 1 Open Date
Oct. 8 CLEVELAND, 4
Oct. 15 at Green Bay, 1
Oct. 22 at Washington, 1
Oct. 29 GREEN BAY, 1
Nov. 5 at Atlanta, 1
Nov. 12 TAMPA BAY, 1
Nov. 19 at Chicago, 1
Nov. 23 MINNESOTA, 12:30
Dec. 4 CHICAGO, 9
Dec. 10 at Houston, 1
Dec. 17 JACKSONVILLE, 1
Dec. 23 at Tampa Bay, 4
All times Eastern

By MIKE O'HARA

What does a coach with a two-year contract extension and three playoff appearances in the last four years have to worry about?

If your name is Wayne Fontes, the answer is plenty.

There is never a moment to rest on his laurels for Fontes, perhaps the one coach who has spent more time on the hot seat than any current NFL field leader.

His teams have achieved modest success in the last four years, winning the NFC Central title in 1991 and 1993 and making the playoffs last year as a wild card team.

And the Lions' offense features

one of the NFL's most exciting and productive players in running back Barry Sanders, who made a serious run on the single-season rushing record for most of last season and finished with 1,883 yards.

But there is always another fire for Fontes to put out.

He has not been able to satisfy his ever-growing legion of doubters in Detroit, who think he has kept his job by glad-handing team owner William Clay Ford, and who point to his many changes in quarterbacks, assistant coaches and game strategies as proof that Fontes does not provide the firm, direct guidance a team needs to become a legitimate Super Bowl contender.

Although Ford gave Fontes a contract extension through 1997 after last season, Fontes' job security always is a hot question. A draft-day trade with San Diego, in which the Lions gave up their second-round pick for the Chargers' No. 1 choice in 1996, is an indication that Fontes feels somewhat secure.

"We have a great opportunity to keep this team young and keep it good," Fontes said. "I made that decision to trade because it's best for this team. Let's stay young. Let's stay good. Let's stay strong."



One of the NFL's most elusive runners, Barry Sanders was stopped behind the line of scrimmage 51 times in '94.

MILESTONES

- Barry Sanders needs 1,328 rushing yards to reach 10,000 in just his seventh pro season.
- If the Lions finish above .500, it will be the first time they have had three straight winning seasons since 1969-'72, when they finished a streak of four straight years over .500 with a record of 8-5.

POWER RATING

71

QUARTERBACKS

Prior to the '94 season, incumbents Erik Kramer, Rodney Peete and Andre Ware all were allowed to leave as free agents. Fontes' juggling game with quarterbacks ended with the No. 1 quarterback being Scott Mitchell, the \$11.1 million free agent from Miami. And, as an afterthought, the Lions signed Dave Krieg to play backup.

Alas, the position was turned upside down when Mitchell went down in the ninth game with a broken bone in his right wrist, and Krieg carried the Lions to a playoff berth by throwing 14 touchdowns against only three interceptions the rest of the way.

Now, Mitchell is back and healthy, having recovered from both the broken bone and a rotator cuff injury that was detected in his postseason physical. Mitchell was throwing almost sidearm when his season ended prematurely, and that could have contributed to his poor completion rate (48.4 percent) and lowly quarterback rating (62.0). He had 10 touchdowns and 11 interceptions — with five of the interceptions in his last two games.

With an offseason to collect his thoughts, and the presence of coach Greg Landry as a full-time, hands-on tutor, Mitchell ought to improve greatly.

The Lions plucked Don Majkowski from Indianapolis and Don Hollas from Cincinnati to replace Krieg and Chuck Long.

RATING: 6

RUNNING BACKS

Whenever they get in trouble, the Lions know they can give the ball to Sanders and something good will happen — most of the time. Last year, the Lions' main man ran away with the NFL rushing title. He had six runs of 62 yards or longer and averaged 5.7 yards per carry. Remarkably, Sanders was tackled 51 times behind the line of scrimmage for 146 yards in losses, which meant he gained 2,029 yards on 280 carries that did not lose yardage.

There wasn't much depth behind Sanders, and the Lions lost some of it when Derrick Moore was traded to San Francisco. That leaves Eric Lynch, who has been mostly a blocker for Sanders, as the only veteran on the roster. Last year, Lynch had one carry for no gain. The Lions hope rookie fullback Cory Schlesinger, a sixth-round draft choice from Nebraska with surprising speed, can provide blocking support in the two-back formation.

RATING: 10

RECEIVERS

Herman Moore developed into a Pro Bowl-caliber player as the bail-out guy for Krieg and Mitchell. Moore finished the season with 72 receptions for 1,173 yards and a team-high 11 touchdowns. Brett Perriman does a lot of the gritty work inside, although he played an outside position in the three-receiver formation most of last year and caught 56 passes.

This can be a strong group if Johnnie Morton, last year's No. 1 pick who had only three catches, comes on. Aubrey Matthews is also a dependable third receiver. Anthony Carter caught two touchdown passes in his first game as a Lion, then went out for most of the season the next

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
5	Harold Alexander	P	6-2/224	3	Appalachian St.
48	Tom Beer	ILB	6-1/237	2	Wayne State
36	Bennie Blades	S	6-1/221	8	Miami (Fla.)
96	Shane Bonham	DL	6-4/260	2	Tennessee
27	Jocelyn Borgella	CB	5-10/180	2	Cincinnati
75	Lomas Brown	T	6-4/275	11	Florida
68	Leonard Burton	C	6-3/275	9	South Carolina
32	Willie Clay	S	5-9/184	4	Georgia Tech
77	Mike Compton	C/G	6-6/297	3	West Virginia
76	Scott Conover	T	6-4/285	5	Purdue
53	Kevin Glover	C	6-2/282	11	Maryland
89	Ron Hall	TE	6-4/245	9	Hawaii
49	Ty Hallock	TE	6-3/249	3	Michigan State
4	Jason Hanson	K	5-11/183	4	Washington St.
99	Tracy Hayworth	LB	6-3/260	6	Tennessee
16	Don Hollas	QB	6-3/215	4	Rice
82	Rodney Holman	TE	6-3/238	14	Tulane
25	Greg Jeffries	CB	5-9/184	3	Virginia
59	Mike Johnson	ILB	6-1/230	10	Virginia Tech
52	Scott Kowalkowski	ILB	6-2/228	4	Notre Dame
55	Antonio London	LB	6-2/234	3	Alabama
73	David Lutz	G/T	6-6/305	13	Georgia Tech
26	Eric Lynch	RB	5-10/224	3	Grand Valley St.
1	Don Majkowski	QB	6-3/208	9	Indianapolis
39	Van Malone	S	5-11/186	2	Texas
40	Robert Massey	CB	5-11/195	7	N.C. Central
83	Aubrey Matthews	WR	5-7/165	10	Delta State
47	Ryan McNeil	CB	6-2/192	3	Miami (Fla.)
19	Scott Mitchell	QB	6-6/230	6	Utah
84	Herman Moore	WR	6-3/210	5	Virginia
87	Johnnie Morton	WR	6-0/190	2	USC
71	Zefross Moss	T	6-6/324	7	Alabama State
90	Dan Owens	DL	6-3/280	6	USC
80	Brett Perriman	WR	6-9/180	8	Miami (Fla.)
91	Robert Porcher	DE	6-3/283	4	South Carolina St.
34	Ron Rivers	RB	5-8/205	1	Fresno State
3	Mark Royals	P	6-5/215	6	Appalachian St.
20	Barry Sanders	RB	5-8/203	7	Oklahoma State
97	Tracy Scroggins	LB	6-2/255	4	Tulsa
62	Tony Semple	OG	6-4/286	2	Memphis State
54	Chris Spielman	ILB	6-0/247	8	Ohio State
98	Henry Thomas	DL	6-2/277	9	Louisiana State
13	Gino Torretta	QB	6-2/215	3	Miami (Fla.)
29	Sean Vanhorse	CB	5-10/180	6	Howard
64	James Wilson	DE	6-3/253	1	Tennessee
95	Mike Wells	DE	6-3/287	2	Iowa
67	Doug Widell	G	6-4/280	7	Boston College
44	Richard Woodley	WR	5-9/180	1	Texas Christian

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1	Luther Elliss	DE	6-5/291	Utah
3	David Sloan	TE	6-6/254	New Mexico
5	Stephen Boyd	LB	6-0/247	Boston College
5a	Kez McCorvey	WR	6-0/180	Florida State
5b	Ronald Cherry	T	6-4/300	McNeese State
6	Kevin Hickman	TE	6-4/258	Navy
6a	Cory Schlesinger	RB	6-0/230	Nebraska
7	Hessley Hempstead	G	6-1/295	Kansas



Herman Moore (72 catches, 1,173 yards, 11 TDs) emerged as one of the league's best receivers.

week with a broken collarbone, leaving the 34-year-old free agent's future with the Lions' uncertain.

With so little production at tight end from Ron Hall (10 catches), Ty Hallock and Rodney Holman, the Lions hope for help from both of their rookie draft choices — David Sloan of New Mexico and Kevin Hickman of Navy.

RATING: 8

OFFENSIVE LINE

The Lions gave up six sacks in the second game against Minnesota, five in the finale at Miami, and Sanders was held to minus-one yard on 13 carries in the playoff loss to Green Bay. The unit was simply overpowered each time.

Free agent Zefross Moss, a 324-pound tackle from Indianapolis, was signed to play right tackle so Dave Lutz could move inside to right guard. Lutz, 35, is tough and strong in a limited area, and playing guard instead of tackle suits him better. His presence should make the Lions less vulnerable to an inside rush, which wrecked their running game at times last year.

Mike Compton or Doug Widell will take over at left guard for Shawn Bouwens, who signed with Jacksonville. Center Kevin Glover is steady, and left tackle Lomas Brown is coming off his fifth straight Pro Bowl.

RATING: 7

DEFENSIVE LINE

After his line had only 26 sacks last year, Fontes decided to go to an attacking defense and play a four-man line. Free agent Henry Thomas was signed to play what the Lions called the "cocked tackle." In the past, the Lions did not have a lineman who had to be accounted for on every play. Thomas will change that.

Top draft pick Luther Elliss has been handed left end. Robert Porcher ought to thrive from both the new scheme and also the chance to play tackle next to Thomas. Either Tracy Hayworth or Tracy Scroggins will get a crack at right end.

RATING: 7

LINEBACKERS

Chris Spielman and Mike Johnson are one of the league's top tandems inside, and they'll both play inside the way the Lions stack their three linebackers in the 4-3. Spielman reads the run as well as anybody, and Johnson will play the open side, which gives him more coverage responsibility. Scroggins, with 18 sacks in only 14 starts in three years, could be strong at outside linebacker if he doesn't play the rush end spot on the line. Antonio London could start outside if Scroggins plays end.

RATING: 8

SECONDARY

As a unit, the secondary had only 12 interceptions while surrendering 21 touchdown passes. Part of it was from the scheme, which had the Lions play soft on the corners. And part of it was attributed to the lack of a strong rush up front.

The secondary has to get better. Robert Massey was more physical than expected at right corner a year ago, but Ryan McNeil, hampered by a severe ankle injury most of the season, was woeful against the run at left corner in his first full season as a starter. Bennie Blades, who played hard and hurt all year, will move from free safety to strong safety, leaving Van Malone and Willie Clay to battle for the other spot in the deep secondary. Sean Vanhorne was signed to play nickel back.

RATING: 6

SPECIAL TEAMS

A quote from Packers coach Mike Holmgren said it all: "I can't tell you how happy I am that Mel Gray isn't playing for Detroit anymore." Gray scored three touchdowns on kickoff returns last year and changed field position, either with returns or because of short punts and kickoffs by teams trying to keep the ball away from him. His departure to Houston as a free agent likely puts Morton on kickoff returns and either Clay or Periman on punt returns.

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	... ATLANTA	... Won, 31-28 (OT)
Sept. 11	... at Minnesota	... Lost, 10-3
Sept. 19	... at Dallas	... Won, 20-17 (OT)
Sept. 25	... NEW ENGLAND	... Lost, 23-17
Oct. 2	... at Tampa Bay	... Lost, 24-14
Oct. 9	... SAN FRANCISCO	... Lost, 27-21
Oct. 23	... CHICAGO	... Won, 21-16
Oct. 20	... at N.Y. Giants	... Won, 28-25 (OT)
Nov. 6	... at Green Bay	... Lost, 38-30
Nov. 13	... TAMPA BAY	... Won, 14-9
Nov. 20	... at Chicago	... Lost, 20-10
Nov. 24	... BUFFALO	... Won, 35-21
Dec. 4	... GREEN BAY	... Won, 34-31
Dec. 10	... at N.Y. Jets	... Won, 18-7
Dec. 17	... MINNESOTA	... Won, 41-19
Dec. 25	... at Miami	... Lost, 27-20
Dec. 31	... at Green Bay	... Lost, 16-12*

* NFC Wild Card game

Harold Alexander and Mark Royals were signed to compete for the punting job held by Greg Montgomery for one season. Montgomery was second in the NFC in punting average, but the Lions felt he could have done a better job of punting for the corners.

Kicker Jason Hanson is coming off a down year, making only 18 of 27 field-goal attempts, but he won three games in overtime.

RATING: 6

DRAFT

Elliss is athletic — a 6-foot-5, 291-pounder with size and quickness. And his intensity will fit in with John Teerlinck's scheme. The two tight ends, Sloan and Hickman, have a chance to contribute. And sixth-round draft pick Schlesinger can earn a living as a blocker. The trade with San Diego gives the Lions two first-round picks next year, which means a chance to move up and get an impact player. A sleeper to watch is Florida State receiver Kez McCorvey, whose lack of speed left him available in the fifth round.

RATING: 7

COACHING

The Lions had their customary across-the-board changes this year. Tom Moore was elevated from quarterbacks coach to offensive coordinator. Teerlinck was hired away from Minnesota and given the title of assistant head coach/defense, but his real job is to install the four-man line as the Lions finally ditch the 3-4, bend-don't-break defense.

Fontes is in a no-win position with the fans. If he loses, the faithless hope management uses it as a reason to fire him. If he wins, the same folks will say the team won in spite of him. One thing about Fontes' teams — they play well late in the season, and he's a players' coach who gets his guys to rally.

RATING: 6

Mike O'Hara covers the Lions for the Detroit News.



CHICAGO BEARS

'94 RECORD

10-8 (3-5 in Division, 1-1 in playoffs)

COACH

Dave Wannstedt, 3rd season with Bears, 17-17

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1994 (Lost to 49ers, 44-15, in NFC semifinals)

HOME STADIUM

Soldier Field, Chicago, Ill. (66,950, grass)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Nate Lewis, WR (Atl.); Chris Gardocki, P (Ind.); Tory Epps, NT (N.O.); Maurice Douglass, S (NYG); Shaun Gayle, S (S.D.)

Free-agent signings: Michael Timpson, WR (N.E.); Marty Carter, S (T.B.); Pat Eilers, S (Wash.); Anthony Johnson, RB (NYJ); Darrell Thompson, RB (G.B.)

Others: Trace Armstrong, DE (traded to Mia.); Mark Bortz, G (retired); Dante Jones, LB (released); Bob Christian, RB (selected by Car. in exp. draft); Tom Myslinski, G (selected by Jack. in exp. draft); Tom Waddle, WR (retired)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Danny Abramowicz (special teams); Clarence Brooks (DL); Ivan Fears (WRs); Dave McGinnis (LBs); Carlos Mainord (defensive assistant); Willie Peete (RBs); Mike Shula (TEs); Bob Slowik (def. coordinator); Ron Turner (off. coordinator); Tony Wise (assistant head coach/OL)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	MINNESOTA, 4
Sept. 11	GREEN BAY, 9
Sept. 17	at Tampa Bay, 4
Sept. 24	at St. Louis, 1
Oct. 1	Open Date
Oct. 8	CAROLINA, 1
Oct. 15	at Jacksonville, 1
Oct. 22	HOUSTON, 1
Oct. 30	at Minnesota, 9
Nov. 5	PITTSBURGH, 4
Nov. 12	at Green Bay, 1
Nov. 19	DETROIT, 1
Nov. 26	at N.Y. Giants, 1
Dec. 4	at Detroit, 1
Dec. 10	at Cincinnati, 1
Dec. 17	TAMPA BAY, 1
Dec. 24	PHILADELPHIA, 1
All times Eastern	

By FRED MITCHELL

For the first time in Dave Wannstedt's three-year head coaching career, Chicago enters the season as one of the favorites in the NFC Central.

Then again, who isn't? The Bears were one of four teams in the Central Division to make the playoffs last season, and one of three to post 9-7 records. In an attempt to separate themselves from the pack, the Bears added two game-breakers in the offseason: Running back Rashaan Salaam and wide receiver Michael Timpson. Salaam, the Heisman Trophy winner from Colorado, was the Bears' No. 1 pick. Timpson was snatched away from Drew Bledsoe and the Patriots in free agency.

The two bear watching this season.

"We don't have guys just happy to be here. We have guys in high-intensity competition," Wannstedt said. "It is going to be a good, healthy situation. We have beefed up our defensive front [with second-rounder Patrick Riley and sixth-rounder Carl Reeves]. We have some good young talent there, and it is going to make it real interesting."

QUARTERBACKS

One year at a time. That is the way Wannstedt is looking at his quarterback position. After totally ignoring the college quarterback prospects in the draft, Wannstedt said veteran Steve Walsh and Erik Kramer will compete for the starting job again this season. Kramer (99 of 158 passing for 1,129 yards and eight TDs) was 1-4 as a starter last season; Walsh (208 of 343 for 2,078 yards and 10 TDs) was 8-3 in the regular season and 1-1 in the playoffs.

"I am looking forward to this year more than any other one," Kramer said. "I feel I have a lot to prove. Maybe that is the wrong way to categorize it, but I just want to be productive. I feel confident that things will work out. I feel the stars will line up properly."

Walsh signed a one-year, \$1.5 million contract with incentives that could escalate his salary to the \$2 million range if he winds up as the starter. Kramer, last year's free-agent hopeful, is slated to be paid



Bears' defensive tackle Chris Zorich is a grizzly sight to opponents.

MILESTONES

- ❖ This season marks the 10-year anniversary of the 1985 Bears' Super Bowl championship team. Only one Bears player remains from that team, kicker Kevin Butler.
- ❖ The Bears hope to win a road game in December for the first time since December 27, 1987. The Bears are at Detroit on December 4 and at Cincinnati on December 10.

POWER RATING
70

\$2.7 million, but his contract is expected to be restructured in case he's beaten out as the starter.

Kramer, 30, is in the second year of a three-year contract, which means the Bears are unsure of their quarterback for 1997 and beyond.

RATING: 6

RUNNING BACKS

Salaam will try to give life to a ho-hum Bears running game that ranked 15th in the NFL last season. Salaam led the nation in rushing (2,055 yards) and scoring (24 touchdowns) last year for the Buffaloes.

Nine backs were slated to report to training camp, including 1994 free-agent pick-up Lewis Tillman (899 yards, 3.3 average), last year's starter. Free-agent acquisitions Darrell Thompson and Anthony Johnson could find a home in Chicago. Second-year fullback Raymont Harris provides a unique dimension with his speed and elusiveness. "There are no 'gimmies' with this group. The competition is going to be fierce," Wannstedt said.

RATING: 7

RECEIVERS

Timpson (74 catches with the Patriots last season) is the fastest Bears receiver since Willie Gault in the mid-1980s. Jeff Graham is coming off a career year with 68 catches for 944 yards, and this could be the year 1993 first-round draft choice Curtis Conway (39 catches, 546 yards and two TDs, including an 85-yarder) blossoms into a full-fledged star after displaying flashes of brilliance last season. Rookie Jack Jackson will battle for the fourth receiver spot, lining up behind Graham as a slot receiver.

"But his kickoff return skills and running-after-the-catch skills could be a real plus for him," Wannstedt said.

Tight ends Chris Gedney and Keith Jennings can be more than adequate if they remain healthy. Gedney had 13 catches and three touchdowns before breaking his leg early last season.

RATING: 7

OFFENSIVE LINE

The retirement of perennial standout Mark Bortz means Todd Perry will step in at left guard. Center Jerry Fontenot and left tackle Andy Heck are coming off excellent seasons. Versatile Jay Leeuwenburg is the starter at right guard, and James Williams continues to improve at right tackle.

RATING: 7

DEFENSIVE LINE

The trade of defensive end Trace Armstrong to the Miami Dolphins means Alonzo Spellman (seven sacks in '94) will switch to left end and Albert Fontenot (four sacks) and John Thierry will battle for the starting assignment at right end.

"This is really not a big deal," said Wannstedt, who feels Spellman's ability to bull-rush offensive right tackles will help the Bears do a better job of stopping the run.

Defensive tackles Chris Zorich (5½ sacks) and

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
72	Scott Adams	OL	6-5/305	5	Georgia
70	Troy Auzenne	T	6-7/305	4	California
91	Myron Baker	LB	6-1/232	3	Louisiana Tech
52	Robert Bass	LB	6-1/232	2	Miami (Fla.)
63	Todd Burger	G	6-3/301	2	Penn State
35	James Burton	CB	5-9/181	2	Fresno State
6	Kevin Butler	K	6-1/205	11	Georgia
59	Joe Cain	LB	6-1/239	7	Oregon Tech
20	Mark Carrier	S	6-1/190	6	USC
23	Marty Carter	S	6-1/209	5	Middle Tenn. St.
30	Tony Carter	FB	5-11/232	2	Minnesota
43	Trevor Cobb	RB	5-9/223	2	Rice
93	Ervin Collier	DT	6-3/290	1	Florida A&M
80	Curtis Conway	WR	6-3/193	3	USC
54	Ron Cox	LB	6-2/240	6	Fresno State
37	Pat Eilers	S	5-11/195	5	Notre Dame
99	Jim Flanigan	DT	6-2/280	2	Notre Dame
96	Al Fontenot	DE	6-4/300	3	Baylor
67	Jerry Fontenot	C	6-3/300	7	Texas A&M
84	Chris Gedney	TE	6-5/265	3	Syracuse
81	Jeff Graham	WR	6-2/200	5	Ohio State
22	Robert Green	RB	5-8/212	4	William & Mary
29	Raymont Harris	RB	6-0/225	2	Ohio State
74	Garland Hawkins	DE	6-3/265	2	Syracuse
64	Andy Heck	T	6-6/296	7	Notre Dame
60	Darwin Ireland	LB	5-11/240	1	Arkansas
85	Keith Jennings	TE	6-4-270	6	Clemson
25	Anthony Johnson	FB	6-0/225	6	Notre Dame
32	Dwayne Joseph	CB	5-9/180	1	Syracuse
10	Scott Kaplan	K	6-0/195	1	Pittsburgh
73	Frank Kmet	G	6-3/300	1	Purdue
12	Erik Kramer	QB	6-1/200	6	N.C. State
58	Jay Leeuwenburg	G/C	6-3/290	4	Colorado
39	Jeremy Lincoln	CB	5-10/180	4	Tennessee
26	John Mangum	S	5-10/186	6	Alabama
36	Anthony Marshall	S	6-1/205	1	LSU
9	Shane Matthews	QB	6-3/196	3	Florida
88	Greg McMurtry	WR	6-2/210	6	Michigan
24	Kevin Miniefield	DB	5-9/180	3	Arizona State
92	Barry Minter	LB	6-2/240	3	Tulsa
83	Terry Obee	WR	5-10/189	3	Oregon
75	Todd Perry	G	6-5/310	3	Kentucky
18	Greg Primus	WR	5-11/188	1	Colorado State
19	Kenny Shed	WR	5-9/171	2	Northern Iowa
98	Carl Simpson	DT	6-2/295	3	Florida State
55	Vinson Smith	LB	6-2/247	8	East Carolina
76	Marcus Spears	G/T	6-4/300	2	NW Louisiana St.
90	Alonzo Spellman	DE	6-4/290	4	Ohio State
94	John Thierry	DE	6-4/260	2	Alcorn State
33	Darrell Thompson	RB	6-1/225	6	Minnesota
27	Lewis Tillman	RB	6-0/204	7	Jackson State
86	Michael Timpson	WR	5-10/180	7	Penn State
44	Cedric Walker	S	6-0/205	1	Stephen F. Austin
4	Steve Walsh	QB	6-3/205	7	Miami (Fla.)
89	Ryan Wetnight	TE	6-2/240	3	Stanford
71	James Williams	T	6-7/335	5	Cheyney State (Pa.)
21	Donnell Woolford	CB	5-9/188	7	Clemson
97	Chris Zorich	DT	6-1/280	5	Notre Dame

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1	Rashaan Salaam	RB	6-1/226	Colorado
2a	Patrick Riley	DT	6-5/286	Miami (Fla.)
2b	Todd Sauerbrun	P	5-10/206	West Virginia
3a	Sean Harris	LB	6-3/244	Arizona
3b	Evan Pilgrim	G	6-4/300	BYU
4	Jack Jackson	WR	5-8/171	Florida
6a	Kenny Gales	DB	5-11/173	Wisconsin
6b	Carl Reeves	DE	6-4/247	North Carolina St.
7	Jamal Cox	LB	6-1/240	Georgia Tech

BEARS

Carl Simpson must step up their run defense. Rookie Riley and Reeves should add quality depth.

RATING: 6

LINEBACKERS

The release of linebacker Dante Jones means Joe Cain (team-leading 129 tackles) will be the starter in the middle. Vinson Smith is slated to start on the weak side and Ron Cox on the strong side. Barry Minter, who had elbow surgery during the off-season, is penciled in to be the nickel linebacker.

RATING: 6

SECONDARY

Veteran safety Shaun Gayle departed to San Diego and the Bears replaced him with hard-hitting 25-year-old Marty Carter, formerly of Tampa Bay. Cornerbacks Donnell Woolford (five interceptions, 21 pass breakups) and Jeremy Lincoln rank with the best in the conference. Free safety Mark Carrier had a solid season against the pass in '94. Cornerback James Burton could be an emerging star.

RATING: 8

SPECIAL TEAMS

The Bears hope the special teams void left by the loss of veteran Maurice Douglass to the New

York Giants will be filled by young players such as cornerback Dwayne Joseph, linebacker Robert Bass, safety Anthony Marshall or Burton.

The Bears drafted West Virginia punter Todd Sauerbrun in the second round to replace Chris Gardocki, who signed with Indianapolis. Sauerbrun led the nation in punting last year with a 48.4-yard average but will be a bigger help to the Bears by booming kickoffs into the end zone. Kevin Butler, the Bears' all-time leading scorer, missed a key field goal last season against the Vikings but won two other games with late kicks.

RATING: 7

DRAFT

Wannstedt never dreamed Salaam would be available when the Bears' turn arrived in the first round of the draft (No. 21). Unforeseen developments earlier in the first round made the running back a dream come true for the Bears. In the second round, the Bears selected Miami defensive lineman Riley (6-5, 286) and Sauerbrun. Riley is coming off a torn anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee suffered last November, but he is expected to recover fully.

RATING: 8

COACHING

Wannstedt, the former defensive coordinator for the Cowboys, displayed his genius early on in

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	... TAMPA BAY	... Won, 21-9
Sept. 12	... at Philadelphia	... Lost, 30-22
Sept. 18	... MINNESOTA	... Lost, 42-14
Sept. 25	... at N.Y. Jets	... Won, 19-7
Oct. 2	... BUFFALO	... Won, 20-13
Oct. 9	... NEW ORLEANS	... Won, 17-7
Oct. 23	... at Detroit	... Lost, 21-16
Oct. 31	... GREEN BAY	... Lost, 33-6
Nov. 6	... at Tampa Bay	... Won, 20-6
Nov. 13	... at Miami	... Won, 17-14
Nov. 20	... DETROIT	... Won, 20-10
Nov. 27	... at Arizona	... Won, 19-16 (OT)
Dec. 1	... at Minnesota	... Lost, 33-27 (OT)
Dec. 8	... at Green Bay	... Lost, 40-3
Dec. 14	... L.A. RAMS	... Won, 27-13
Dec. 23	... NEW ENGLAND	... Lost, 13-3
Jan. 1	... at Minnesota	... Won, 35-18*
Jan. 7	... at San Francisco	... Lost, 44-15†

Chicago. But sprucing up the Bears' offense will be the major task in '95. Deciding on a starting quarterback may be Wannstedt's biggest decision. He has worn hats as both head coach and player personnel evaluator with mixed reviews.

RATING: 8

Fred Mitchell covers the Bears for the Chicago Tribune.

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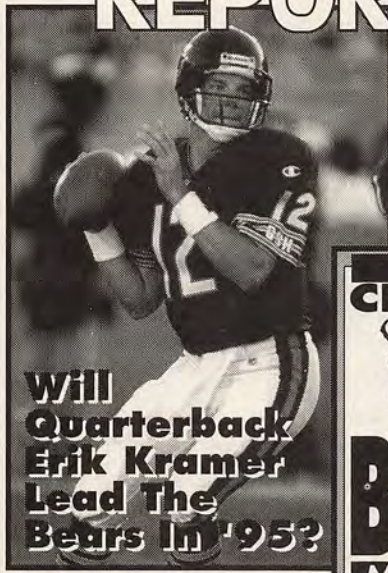
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TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS

'94 RECORD

6-10 (2-6 in Division)

COACH

Sam Wyche, 4th season with Buccaneers, 16-32; 77-95 overall

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1981 (Lost to Dallas, 38-0, in NFC Divisional Playoffs)

HOME STADIUM

Tampa Stadium, Tampa, Fla.
(74,301, grass)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Tony Covington, S (Sea.); Jeff Brady, LB (Minn.); Marty Carter, S (Chi.); Vernon Turner, WR (Car.); Dan Stryzinski, P (Atl.)

Free-agent signings: Alvin Harper, WR (Dall.); Kenneth Gant, S (Dall.); Reggie Roby, P (Wash.); Marc Spindler, DE (Det.); Clarence Verdin, WR (Atl.)

Others: Craig Erickson (traded to Ind.); Shawn Price, DE (selected by Car. in exp. draft); Rogerick Green, DB (selected by Jack. in exp. draft); Mazio Royster, RB (selected by Jack. in exp. draft)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Maxie Baughan (LBs); Kippy Brown (RBs); Ken Clarke (DL); David Culley (WRs); Johnnie Lynn (DBs); Mike Mularkey (TEs); Tom Pratt (DL); Brad Roll (strength and conditioning); Turk Schonert (QB); George Stewart (special teams); Rusty Tillman (defensive coordinator); Bob Wylie (OL)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3 at Philadelphia, 1
Sept. 10 at Cleveland, 1
Sept. 17 CHICAGO, 4
Sept. 24 WASHINGTON, 1
Oct. 1 at Carolina, 1
Oct. 8 CINCINNATI, 1
Oct. 15 MINNESOTA, 1
Oct. 22 ATLANTA, 1
Oct. 29 at Houston, 4
Nov. 5 Open Date
Nov. 12 at Detroit, 1
Nov. 19 JACKSONVILLE, 1
Nov. 26 at Green Bay, 1
Dec. 3 at Minnesota, 1
Dec. 10 GREEN BAY, 8
Dec. 17 at Chicago, 1
Dec. 23 DETROIT, 4
All times Eastern

By PAT YASINSKAS

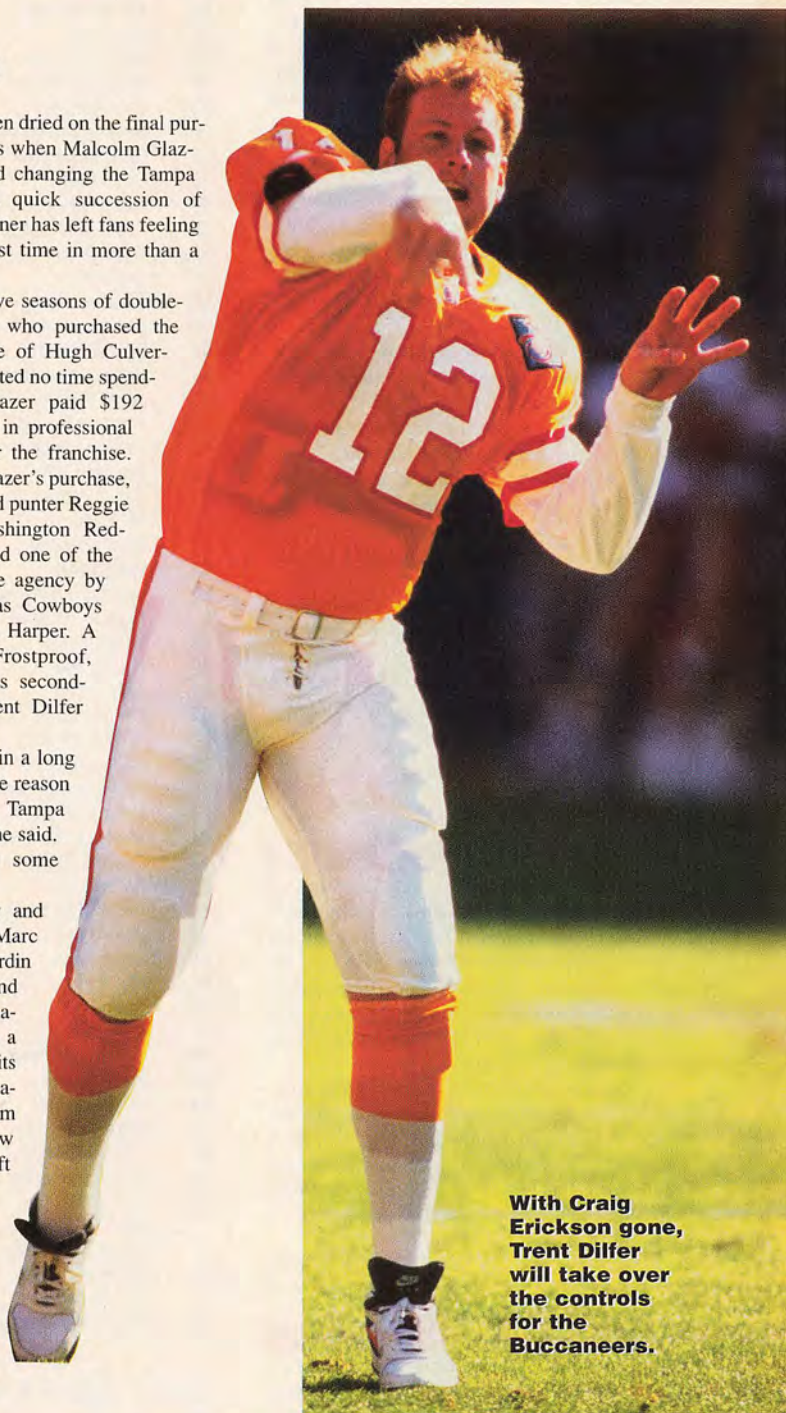
The ink hadn't even dried on the final purchase documents when Malcolm Glazer's hand started changing the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. A quick succession of moves by the new owner has left fans feeling optimistic for the first time in more than a decade.

After 12 consecutive seasons of double-digit losses, Glazer, who purchased the team from the estate of Hugh Culverhouse in January, wasted no time spending big Buc-ks. Glazer paid \$192 million — the most in professional sports history — for the franchise. Within a month of Glazer's purchase, the Buccaneers signed punter Reggie Roby from the Washington Redskins and later scored one of the biggest coups of free agency by signing former Dallas Cowboys wide receiver Alvin Harper. A native of nearby Frostproof, Fla., Harper provides second-year quarterback Trent Dilfer with a deep threat.

"For the first time in a long time, we've got a little reason to beat our chest," Tampa Bay coach Sam Wyche said.

And maybe beat some opponents.

Add Harper, Roby and other free agents Marc Spindler, Clarence Verdin and Kenny Gant and new defensive coordinator Rusty Tillman to a team that won four of its final five games last season, and the optimism has a solid basis. Throw in first-round draft picks Warren Sapp and Derrick Brooks and the Bucs could be a playoff contender for the first time since they went 5-4 in the strike-shortened 1982 season.



With Craig Erickson gone, Trent Dilfer will take over the controls for the Buccaneers.

MILESTONES

Although there's hope for a winning season, a 7-9 season would bring an end to a dubious streak. The franchise has had 12 consecutive years of double-digit losses.

Once again, the Bucs will try to return a kickoff for a touchdown for the first time in franchise history.

POWER RATING

58

BUCCANEERS

Glazer obviously means business. He signed all of his draft picks within 17 days, the fastest any team in history has signed all of its draftees.

QUARTERBACKS

Despite a less-than-stellar rookie campaign, Dilfer has been handed control of the offense. Forget that the Fresno State flame-thrower lost both of his starts last year and that his quarterback rating (36.3) dropped below the temperature of most winter nights in Tampa. Last year's starter, Craig Erickson, was dealt to the Indianapolis Colts for a first-round pick in 1996, thereby averting the anticipated quarterback controversy in training camp.

Dilfer won't have an easy time replacing Erickson, who was quite accurate last season. The former Miami (Fla.) quarterback averaged one interception every 40 passes last season. "I'm sure in my mind that Trent is ready to take over," Wyche said.

Dilfer was the sixth overall pick in the 1994 draft — the second quarterback taken — but held out for most of training camp and was never a threat to Erickson. But that changed in the offseason, when Dilfer spent almost every day working with Wyche and quarterbacks coach Turk Schonert. Considering Glazer's penchant for change, Wyche decided the future has arrived and will rest his fate on Dilfer's highly regarded right arm.

Casey Weldon, the Bucs' No. 3 quarterback the last two seasons, is expected to move into the backup role after spending the spring playing in the World League of American Football. Fellow Florida State alum Peter Tom Willis will get a shot at the No. 3 spot.

RATING: 4

RUNNING BACKS

Errict Rhett was one of the biggest surprises of last year's rookie crop. Despite not starting until the season's ninth game, Rhett became only the fourth running back in team history to rush for 1,000 yards. Only Marshall Faulk had a better debut season among rookie running backs, and Rhett is a better receiver than his Colts' counterpart. Rhett caught 22 balls last season.

There's no doubt Rhett earned the starting job for the beginning of this season, but the Bucs also have veteran Vince Workman as a backup and third-down specialist. Anthony McDowell and Rudy Harris provide solid blocking as fullbacks.

RATING: 6

RECEIVERS

Dilfer won't be starting from scratch because he has a crew of receivers that should be the best in team history. Harper, the long-ball threat on the Cowboys' last two Super Bowl championship teams, averaged almost 25 yards per catch last season and had eight touchdowns, including a 90-yarder. He's a tremendous leaper and should thrive as a No. 1 receiver, having escaped the daunting shadow of Michael Irvin in Dallas. Harper, instead, will team with possession receiver Lawrence Dawsey (46 catches, 673 yards). That pair will be backed up by Courtney

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
72	Chidi Ahonotu	DE/DT	6-2/288	3	California
86	Tyji Armstrong	TE	6-4/262	4	Mississippi
62	Ian Beckles	G	6-1/304	6	Indiana
89	Harold Bishop	TE	6-4/254	2	LSU
53	Ed Brady	LB	6-2/238	12	Illinois
28	Curtis Buckley	S	6-0/191	3	East Texas State
27	Barney Bussey	S	6-0/215	10	S.C. State
68	Joel Crisman	G	6-5/300	1	USC
88	Horace Copeland	WR	6-2/198	3	Miami (Fla.)
73	Brad Culpepper	DT	6-1/270	4	Florida
75	Eric Curry	DE	6-5/270	3	Alabama
18	Tyree Davis	WR	5-9/175	1	Central Arkansas
80	Lawrence Dawsey	WR	6-0/192	5	Florida State
12	Trent Dilfer	QB	6-4/235	2	Fresno State
76	Scott Dill	T/G	6-5/295	8	Memphis
39	Charles Dimry	CB	6-0/176	8	UNLV
71	Santana Dotson	DT/DE	6-5/276	4	Baylor
93	Demetrius DuBose	LB	6-1/240	3	Notre Dame
41	Bobby Joe Edmonds	RB	5-11/186	5	Arkansas
37	Jerry Ellison	RB	5-10/194	1	Tenn.-Chattanooga
22	Thomas Everett	S	5-9/190	9	Baylor
92	Jeff Faulkner	DE	6-4/305	5	Southern
29	Kenneth Gant	S	5-11/189	6	Albany State (Ga.)
74	Paul Gruber	T	6-5/296	8	Wisconsin
82	Alvin Harper	WR	6-3/208	5	Tennessee
81	Jackie Harris	TE	6-4/248	6	NE Louisiana
43	Rudy Harris	FB	6-1/257	3	Clemson
85	Courtney Hawkins	WR	5-9/183	4	Michigan State
5	Michael Husted	PK	6-0/188	3	Virginia
90	Milton Jones	DE	6-5/270	2	Central State (Ohio)
79	Sean Love	G	6-3/300	3	Penn State
47	John Lynch	S	6-2/216	3	Stanford
51	Lonnie Marts	LB	6-1/236	6	Tulane
61	Tony Mayberry	C	6-4/292	6	Wake Forest
35	Martin Mayhew	CB	5-8/178	8	Florida State
33	Anthony McDowell	FB	5-11/240	4	Texas Tech
21	Mike McGruder	CB	5-10/182	6	Kent
94	Toddrick McIntosh	DT/DE	6-3/277	2	Florida State
70	Charles McRae	G/T	6-7/306	5	Tennessee
83	Dave Moore	TE	6-2/248	3	Pittsburgh
56	Hardy Nickerson	LB	6-2/228	9	California
69	Pete Peirson	T	6-5/295	1	Washington
95	Keith Powe	DE	6-3/265	2	UTEP
60	Jim Pyne	C	6-2/282	2	Virginia Tech
32	Errict Rhett	RB	5-11/211	2	Florida
1	Reggie Roby	P	6-2/258	13	Iowa
49	Cedric Saunders	TE	6-3/240	1	Ohio State
98	Mare Spindler	DT/DE	6-5/290	6	Pittsburgh
45	Tony Stargell	CB	5-11/186	6	Tennessee State
67	Mike Sullivan	C/G/T	6-3/292	4	Miami (Fla.)
87	Lamar Thomas	WR	6-1/163	3	Miami (Fla.)
2	Clarence Verdin	KR/WR	5-8/162	10	SW Louisiana
11	Casey Weldon	QB	6-1/206	4	Florida State
77	Mark Wheeler	DT	6-2/285	4	Texas A&M
4	Peter Tom Willis	QB	6-2/204	5	Florida State
84	Charles Wilson	WR	5-10/185	5	Memphis
91	Karl Wilson	DE/DT	6-5/274	8	LSU
46	Vince Workman	RB	5-10/205	7	Ohio State

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1a	Warren Sapp	DT	6-1/281	Miami (Fla.)
1b	Derrick Brooks	LB	6-0/229	Florida State
2	Melvin Johnson	S	6-0/195	Kentucky
4	Jerry Wilson	CB	5-10/184	Southern
5	Clifton Abraham	CB	5-9/184	Florida State
6	Wardell Rouse	LB	6-2/231	Clemson
7a	Stephen Ingram	T/G	6-4/311	Maryland
7b	Jeffrey Rodgers	DE	6-3/273	Texas A&M Kingsville



Horace Copeland will add depth to a suddenly stocked receiving corps.

Hawkins and former University of Miami receivers Horace Copeland and Lamar Thomas. The Bucs also have a quality receiving threat in former Green Bay tight end Jackie Harris, and Wyche loved to throw to his tight ends during his successful stint in Cincinnati.

RATING: 8

OFFENSIVE LINE

After making Charles McRae the starter at right guard midway through last season, quarterback sacks became a rarity — only two over the last six games — and Rhett started posting 100-yard games. With Pro Bowl-caliber left tackle Paul Gruber leading the way, Dilfer should have time to throw and grow into the starting role. Gruber, the only player in Tampa Bay history to start each of his first 100 games, was charged with only one sack and one holding penalty in 1994. He's been the lone consistent element to the Bucs' most turbulent unit. Gruber is the only player left on the team who was

acquired in the '80s, and he's been part of 25 different offensive combinations.

Wyche may have finally settled on one of those combos. Gruber, McRae, Ian Berkles, Tony Mayberry and Scott Dill were together for the last 10 games of the year. Dill was the only Buc to be on the field for every offensive snap in '94.

RATING: 7

DEFENSIVE LINE

This was the biggest problem area last year, with the Bucs finishing last in the NFL with a paltry 20 sacks. Drafting Sapp, perhaps the most feared defensive player in the country last year at the University of Miami, and signing Spindler should bring improvement. Sapp could be a disruptive force — along the line of Cortez Kennedy — in the interior line for the next decade. Still, the Bucs need to see some improvement from defensive end Eric Curry, who had only three sacks in '94. New defensive coordinator Tillman will try to light a fire under Curry, who's been a big disappointment in his three seasons with the Bucs.

RATING: 5

LINEBACKERS

The Bucs shift to a 4-3 defense after using a perpetual nickel package most of last year, and that means at least one new starter at linebacker. Hardy Nickerson, one of the best pre-Glazer free-agent pickups, is the unit's leader at middle linebacker. Nickerson registered a team-high 122 tackles (86 solo) last season and had two interceptions. Brooks, the team's other first-round pick from the Sunshine State, could also make a big impact here. Brooks' size (6-foot, 229 pounds) may have worried some teams, but he was a relentless defender with big-play abilities at Florida State.

RATING: 5

SECONDARY

The Bucs were toasted often last year, but the blame can't be placed exclusively on the secondary. With a weak pass rush, quarterbacks had too much time to throw. In one three-game stretch, Jeff George, Steve Young and Warren Moon rolled up 111 points on Tampa's over-matched secondary.

Safeties Thomas Everett and Gant, plus cornerback Martin Mayhew, lead an experienced group with a distinct NFC East flavor. Everett and Gant both played on Super Bowl winners in Dallas while Mayhew comes from the Redskins.

Gant is expected to replace Marty Carter, the team's second-leading tackler last season, who left for division rival Chicago via free agency.

RATING: 4

SPECIAL TEAMS

One of Tampa Bay's few strong points last year should be even better. Pro Bowler Roby (44.4-yard average in '94) can still kick the

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4 . . . at Chicago	Lost, 21-9
Sept. 11 . . . INDIANAPOLIS	Won, 24-10
Sept. 18 . . . NEW ORLEANS	Lost, 9-7
Sept. 25 . . . at Green Bay	Lost, 30-3
Oct. 2 DETROIT	Won, 24-14
Oct. 9 at Atlanta	Lost, 34-13
Oct. 23 . . . at San Francisco	Lost, 41-16
Oct. 30 MINNESOTA	Lost, 36-13
Nov. 6 CHICAGO	Lost, 20-6
Nov. 13 . . . at Detroit	Lost, 14-9
Nov. 20 . . . at Seattle	Lost, 22-21
Nov. 27 . . . at Minnesota	Won, 20-17 (OT)
Dec. 4 WASHINGTON	Won, 26-21
Dec. 11 . . . L.A. RAMS	Won, 24-14
Dec. 18 . . . at Washington	Won, 17-14
Dec. 24 GREEN BAY	Lost, 34-19

leather out of the ball, and Michael Husted (23 of 35 on field goals), the team's leading scorer last season with 89 points, is a reliable kicker. But the signing of Verdin (23.3 yards per kickoff return) brings a solid return threat to a team that has returned no kickoffs and one punt (last year by Vernon Turner, who signed with Carolina in the offseason) for touchdowns in its history.

RATING: 8

DRAFT

The Bucs took two gambles in the first round that could pay off immediately. Sapp was a top five pick until word of his alleged seven failed drug tests leaked on the eve of the draft. The Bucs actually passed him up with the seventh pick (trading the choice to Philadelphia), banking that he would be there at No. 12. If he can stay out of trouble, Sapp — playing close to his home and family — could be the solution on the defensive line.

"It won't take long for them [the 11 teams which passed him by] to remember how good I was," Sapp said. "I believe Tampa Bay is real happy to have me."

Brooks should also get a chance to contribute immediately.

Second-round pick Melvin Johnson of Kentucky and fifth-round pick Clifton Abraham of Florida State could strengthen the defensive secondary. Abraham was one of seven former Seminole on Tampa Bay's spring roster.

RATING: 7

COACHING

Wyche is on the hot seat — again. He saved his job last year by sticking with the experienced Erickson down the stretch. That kept Dilfer from getting playing time and could come back to haunt Wyche. In past years, Wyche had little talent to work with. After the upgrades, there's no room for excuses, especially with Jimmy Johnson lurking out there and an owner expecting quick results from his purchase.

RATING: 4

Pat Yasinskas covers the Buccaneers for the Tampa Tribune.

NFC WEST

PREDICTED ORDER OF FINISH

POWER RATING

1. SAN FRANCISCO 49ers	85
2. NEW ORLEANS SAINTS	70
3. ATLANTA FALCONS	66
4. ST. LOUIS RAMS	65
5. CAROLINA PANTHERS	56



Jerry Rice,
San Francisco

JOE'S PLAYOFF PICKS

49ERS: World Champions again. Steve Young is in his prime, and wide receiver Jerry Rice is on the verge of setting every receiving record there is. And the 'Niners aren't resting on their laurels. They once again proved they're the top organization by trading up to get UCLA wideout J.J. Stokes.

FINAL '94 STANDINGS	OVERALL	DIV.	PF	PA
SAN FRANCISCO 49ers	13-3	6-0	505	296
NEW ORLEANS SAINTS	7-9	4-2	348	407
ATLANTA FALCONS	7-9	2-4	317	385
LOS ANGELES RAMS	4-12	0-6	286	365

PLAYOFF RESULTS

NFC Divisional Semifinals

San Francisco 44, Chicago 15

NFC Championship

San Francisco 38, Dallas 28

Super Bowl XXIX

San Francisco 49, San Diego 26



SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

'94 RECORD

16-3 (6-0 in Division, 3-0 in playoffs)

COACH

George Seifert, 7th season with 49ers, 84-24

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1994 (Beat San Diego, 49-26, in Super Bowl XXIX)

HOME STADIUM

Candlestick Park, San Francisco, Calif. (66,513, grass)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Ricky Watters, RB (Phi.); Dexter Carter, RB (NYJ); Rhett Hall, DT (Phi.); Ed McCaffrey, WR (Den.); Bill Musgrave, QB (Den.)

Free-agent signings: Marquez Pope, CB (St. L.); Oliver Barnett, DT (Buf.); Clifford Hicks, DB (NYJ)

Others: Rickey Jackson, DE (retired); Harry Boatswain, T (selected by Car. in exp. draft); Mark Thomas, DE (selected by Car. in exp. draft)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Dwaine Board (DL); Pete Carroll (def. coord.); Tom Holmoe (DBs); Carl Jackson (RBs); Larry Kirksey (receivers); Alan Lowry (special teams); John Marshall (LBs); Bob McKittrick and Bill McPherson (asst. head coaches); Mike Solari (TEs); Marc Trestman (off. coord./QBs)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	at New Orleans, 1
Sept. 10	ATLANTA, 4
Sept. 17	NEW ENGLAND, 4
Sept. 25	at Detroit, 9
Oct. 1	N.Y. GIANTS, 4
Oct. 8	Open Date
Oct. 15	at Indianapolis, 1
Oct. 22	at St. Louis, 4
Oct. 29	NEW ORLEANS, 4
Nov. 5	CAROLINA, 4
Nov. 12	at Dallas, 4
Nov. 20	at Miami, 9
Nov. 26	ST. LOUIS, 4
Dec. 3	BUFFALO, 8
Dec. 10	at Carolina, 1
Dec. 18	MINNESOTA, 9
Dec. 24	at Atlanta, 1
All times Eastern	

By BRIAN MURPHY

The 49ers won the Super Bowl last year, but you'd be hard-pressed to catch them enjoying it. Within a week of claiming an unprecedented fifth Super Bowl, they lost both their valued offensive coordinator and their fire-and-brimstone defensive coordinator when Mike Shanahan took a head coaching job in Denver and Ray Rhodes did the same in Philadelphia.

Instead of checking out their reflections in the gleam of the Vince Lombardi Trophy, the 49ers had to hustle out and hire new coordinators. They found an offensive mind they think is simpatico with the 49ers' complex passing offense in former Tampa Bay assistant Marc Trestman, who was out of football the past few years while working as a financial counselor.

The 49ers then went out and hired former Jets coach Pete Carroll as defensive coordinator, a young, energetic mind the 49ers feel will bring continued vitality to their defense. How these new coordinators adjust to an atmosphere where nothing less than another Super Bowl championship will do should be one of the key questions of the 49ers' season.

Then, in March, running back Ricky Watters chased a fat contract and the opportunity of carry the ball more by following Rhodes to the Eagles. Their running game has suffered on paper, and this, too, will be a major question this season.

But then again, why not just wind up the 49ers and let them go? Steve Young has shown he is in complete control of their offense, just as Joe Montana had control in the 1980s. Jerry Rice shows no sign of slowing down; instead, he is boasting he wants to hold every record possible before he retires, along with taking time to tutor superstar-in-waiting J.J. Stokes.

And the defense is anchored by two young, brilliant defensive tackles in Bryant Young and Dana Stubblefield. If they can add Deion Sanders back when baseball is over, the 49ers may gun for an unprecedented sixth Super Bowl title.

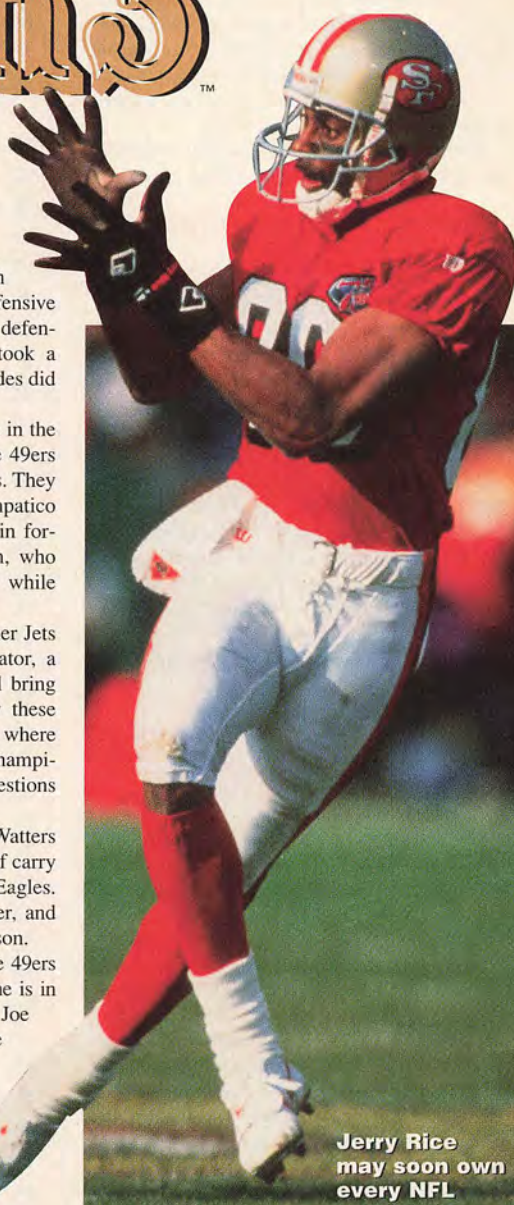
QUARTERBACKS

NFL MVP Young shrugged off the heavy cloak of history in a most sensational way last season, turning in a career-year that ended in Super Bowl glory: A record six touchdown passes in the 49ers' rout of San Diego and the MVP trophy of Super Bowl XXIX. When the 49ers beat Dallas in the NFC title

MILESTONES

- With 115 catches, Jerry Rice will pass Art Monk as the top pass-catching receiver in NFL history.
- With 730 receiving yards, Rice will pass James Lofton as the top yard-gaining receiver in NFL history.

POWER RATING
85



Jerry Rice may soon own every NFL receiving record.

game last January, there were few happier humans than Young, who celebrated his breakthrough into the Bay Area's collective heart with a poignant, triumphant run around Candlestick.

But Young isn't all emotion. He's about cold, hard numbers, too. Last year, he racked up outrageous numbers in Shanahan's unstoppable offense: an NFL-record 112.8 passing rating, a team-record 35 touchdown passes and a team-record 70.3 completion percentage.

The backups, Elvis Grbac and Bob Gagliano, will get to enjoy watching one of the greats.

RATING: 10

RUNNING BACKS

This area is the major question mark facing the team this year. The loss of Watters (66 catches, 877 rushing yards) costs the team a double-threat running and catching the ball. In his stead will be two running backs vying for the starting job: Derek Loville, a camp phenom who made the team with an outstanding preseason a year ago, and Derrick Moore, a young talent who spent the last three years backing up Barry Sanders in Detroit. Neither has Watters' hands, but the 49ers feel they won't miss much in the running game.

Sure to carry much of the load will be burly and cocksure fullback William "Bar None" Floyd (305 rushing yards, six TDs), the second-year player who some feel may be the NFC's best fullback already.

RATING: 7

RECEIVERS

Rice (112 catches, 1,499 yards, 13 TDs) is inarguably the greatest ever at his position. His contributions, work ethic and skills have been documented for years. He hinted at retirement at last year's Super Bowl but also said he won't rest until he owns every receiving record in history. He's not far from accomplishing that feat.

But the big news here is Rice's new student — first-round draft coup Stokes. 'Frisco daringly obtained the UCLA All America by trading away four draft picks, including its first-rounder in 1996. Stokes figures to be a can't-miss star in the 49ers' offense, and helps to freshen the receiver spot currently occupied by aging great John Taylor (41 catches, five TDs). Taylor, 33, was the subject of trade and pay-cut rumors this spring. If he's back, the 49ers will have three greats. If not, Stokes will start.

At tight end, Pro Bowler Brent Jones (49 catches, nine TDs) is coming off a career year and looks solid, even at 32 years of age.

RATING: 10

OFFENSIVE LINE

The 49ers won the Super Bowl last year despite a ghastly parade of injuries that sidelined every starting lineman at some point during the season. Pro Bowl center Bart Oates, who only missed one game, may move to the bench to rest his 36-year-old body. If the 49ers go ahead with that move, 34-year-old Jesse Sapolu, who made the Pro Bowl at guard despite missing five games, moves back to center, his Pro Bowl position of two seasons ago.

At guard, the 49ers are younger and fresher with Derrick Deese and Chris Dalman — both

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
60	Theo Adams	G	6-5/300	3	Hawaii
77	Oliver Barnett	DE	6-3/285	6	Kentucky
79	Harris Barton	G	6-4/286	9	North Carolina
4	Doug Brien	K	5-11/177	2	California
96	Dennis Brown	DE	6-4/280	6	Washington
86	Brett Carolan	TE	6-3/241	2	Washington State
76	Jason Childs	T	6-4/292	2	North Dakota
91	Shane Collins	DE	6-3/267	6	Arizona State
67	Chris Dalman	G/C	6-3/285	3	Stanford
25	Eric Davis	CB	5-11/178	6	Jacksonville State
63	Derrick Deese	G	6-3/270	4	USC
33	Dedrick Dodge	S	6-2/184	4	Florida State
22	Tyronne Drakeford	CB	5-9/185	2	Virginia Tech
40	William Floyd	FB	6-1/242	2	Florida State
14	Bob Gagliano	QB	6-3/205	10	Utah State
59	Steve Gordon	C	6-4/290	2	California
18	Elvis Grbac	QB	6-5/232	3	Michigan
36	Merton Hanks	CB	6-2/185	5	Iowa
47	Clifford Hicks	S/CB	5-10/187	8	Oregon
84	Brent Jones	TE	6-4/230	9	Santa Clara
58	Todd Kelly	DE	6-2/259	3	Tennessee
20	Derek Loville	RB	5-10/205	4	Oregon
29	Anthony Lynn	RB	6-3/230	2	Texas Tech
46	Tim McDonald	S	6-2/215	9	USC
69	Rod Milstead	G	6-2/290	4	Delaware State
55	Kevin Mitchell	LB	6-1/260	2	Syracuse
31	Derrick Moore	RB	6-1/227	3	NE Oklahoma St.
51	Ken Norton, Jr.	LB	6-2/241	8	UCLA
66	Bart Oates	C	6-3/278	11	Brigham Young
53	Anthony Peterson	LB	6-0/223	2	Notre Dame
50	Gary Plummer	LB	6-2/247	10	California
23	Marquez Pope	CB/S	5-11/193	4	Fresno State
85	Ted Popson	TE	6-4/250	2	Portland State
80	Jerry Rice	WR	6-2/200	11	Miss. Valley State
10	Patrick Rowe	WR	6-1/195	3	San Diego State
61	Jessie Sapolu	C	6-4/278	13	Hawaii
76	Kirk Scrafford	T	6-6/275	6	Montana
88	Nate Singleton	WR	5-11/190	4	Grambling
94	Dana Stubblefield	DT	6-2/302	3	Kansas
64	Ralph Tamm	G	6-4/280	8	West Chester
82	John Taylor	WR	6-1/185	10	Delaware State
	Tommy Thompson	P	5-10/192	1	Oregon
71	Jim Wahler	DT	6-4/275	6	UCLA
27	Adam Walker	RB	6-1/210	3	Pittsburgh
74	Steve Wallace	T	6-5/280	10	Auburn
92	Troy Wilson	DE	6-4/235	3	Pitt. St. (Kans.)
54	Lee Woodall	LB	6-0/220	2	West Chester
97	Bryant Young	DT	6-2/276	2	Notre Dame
8	Steve Young	QB	6-2/205	11	Brigham Young

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1	J.J. Stokes	WR	6-4/217	UCLA
4	Tim Hanshaw	G	6-5/300	Brigham Young
6	Antonio Armstrong	LB	6-1/285	Texas A&M
7	Herbert Coleman	DE	6-1/290	Trinity International



Steve Young is coming off an MVP performance in the Super Bowl, where he threw a record six TDs.

25 — the likely starters. Their tackles, Harris Barton and Steve Wallace, have been manning their posts for three 49ers' Super Bowl wins. Though they are aging (Barton is 31, Wallace is 30), they remain arguably the best tackle tandem in the league.

RATING: 8

DEFENSIVE LINE

Quite a dichotomy exists in the 49ers' front four. Their tackles — Pro Bowler Stubblefield and Pro Bowler-in-waiting Young — rival any pair of defensive tackles in the league. Stubblefield led the team with 8.5 sacks while Young had six, to help make the 49ers' run defense No. 2 in the NFL a year ago.

But their defensive ends remain a big question, enough of a trouble spot to rival — and maybe eclipse — the questions surrounding the running game. At one end is Dennis Brown, who lost nearly 60 pounds last year and struggled through his least productive year as a pro. The other defensive end was Rickey Jackson, who has retired.

The 49ers will try to sign pass-rushing free agent Tim Harris, who joined the team in late November last season and notched four playoff sacks, including two of Troy Aikman in the NFC title game.

RATING: 7

LINEBACKERS

Three new linebackers manned the 49ers' new 4-3 defense last year, and after a period of adjust-

1994 RESULTS		
Sept. 5	... L.A. RAIDERS	Won, 44-14
Sept. 11	...at Kansas City	Lost, 24-17
Sept. 18	...at L.A. Rams	Won, 34-19
Sept. 25	...NEW ORLEANS	Won, 24-13
Oct. 2	...PHILADELPHIA	Lost, 40-8
Oct. 9	...at Detroit	Won, 27-21
Oct. 16	...at Atlanta	Won, 42-3
Oct. 23	...TAMPA BAY	Won, 41-16
Nov. 6	...at Washington	Won, 37-22
Nov. 13	...DALLAS	Won, 21-14
Nov. 20	...L.A. RAMS	Won, 31-27
Nov. 28	...at New Orleans	Won, 35-14
Dec. 4	...ATLANTA	Won, 50-14
Dec. 11	...at San Diego	Won, 38-15
Dec. 17	...DENVER	Won, 42-19
Dec. 26	...at Minnesota	Lost, 21-14
Jan. 7	...CHICAGO	Won, 44-15†
Jan. 15	...DALLAS	Won, 38-28#
Jan. 29	...San Diego	Won, 49-26‡
† NFC Semifinals		
# NFC Championship game		
‡ Super Bowl XXIX		

ment, wound up providing run stoppage the 49ers coveted. Ken Norton led the team in tackles, 35-year-old Gary Plummer still has the body of a youngster and second-year sleeper Lee Woodall ably manned his spot as the season wore on.

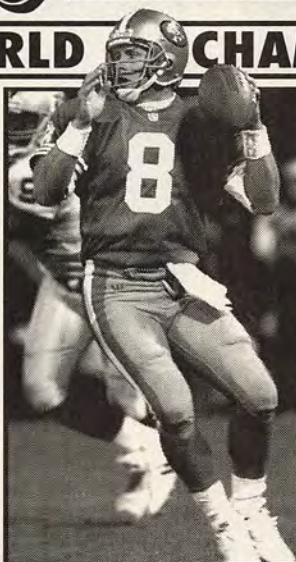
The 49ers are looking to second-year players (continued on page 150)

49ERS REPORT

WORLD CHAMPS

Are The Niners The All-Time Greatest?

... Devoted Exclusively to the San Francisco 49ers and the NFL



All-Pro Steve Young Does It All ...And Then Some!

...



For an NFL-record fifth time, the San Francisco 49ers climbed to the summit and staked their claim as the greatest organization in professional football history. And the Niners don't plan on resting on their laurels because they are committed to winning a SIXTH Super Bowl ring this season. That's right, the defending World Champions have their sights set on Super Bowl XXX. And this journey promises to be every bit as exciting as last year's trip to the top of the league when your Niners twice beat the Cowboys ... when Jerry Rice set the all-time TD record and when Steve Young won another passing title and established himself

as the game's best quarterback by claiming the Super Bowl MVP award.

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NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

'94 RECORD

7-9 (4-2 in Division)

COACH

Jim Mora, 10th season with Saints, 84-63

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1992 (Lost to Eagles, 36-20, in Wild Card game)

HOME STADIUM

Superdome, New Orleans, La.
(69,056, artificial)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent losses: Darion Conner, LB (Car.); Vinnie Clark, DB (Jack.); Tommy Barnhardt, P (Car.); Sam Mills, LB (Car.); Mark Gunn, DT (Phi.)

Free-agent signings: Eric Allen, CB (Phi.); Rufus Porter, LB (Sea.); Richard Harvey, LB (Den.)

Others: Timm Rosenbach, QB (signed out of retirement); Othella Henderson, DB (selected by Jack. in exp. draft); Baron Rollins, G (selected by Car. in exp. draft); James Williams, LB (selected by Jack. in exp. draft)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Jim Haslett (LBs); Larry Kennan (TEs); Monte Kiffin (def. coord.); Joe Marciano (special teams); John Matsko (OL); Jim L. Mora (DBs); Wayne Nunnely (DL); Russell Paternostro (strength and conditioning); Jim Skipper (RBs); Carl Smith (off. coord./QBs); Steve Timble (def. assistant); Steve Walters (WRs)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	SAN FRANCISCO, 1
Sept. 10	at St. Louis, 1
Sept. 17	ATLANTA, 1
Sept. 24	at N.Y. Giants, 1
Oct. 1	PHILADELPHIA, 1
Oct. 8	Open Date
Oct. 15	MIAMI, 4
Oct. 22	at Carolina, 1
Oct. 29	at San Francisco, 4
Nov. 5	ST. LOUIS, 1
Nov. 12	INDIANAPOLIS, 1
Nov. 19	at Minnesota, 4
Nov. 26	CAROLINA, 8
Dec. 3	at New England, 1
Dec. 10	at Atlanta, 1
Dec. 16	GREEN BAY, 4
Dec. 24	at N.Y. Jets, 1
All times Eastern	

By BRIAN ALLEE-WALSH

It made perfect sense when Saints coach Jim Mora identified the three main areas of need in April's NFL draft as "defense, defense, defense."

In a matter of three seasons, the Saints defense had tumbled from first in the NFL in fewest points allowed (202 in 1992) to 27th (407) in '94. That was enough to convince Mora to fire his defensive coordinator and longtime friend Steve Sidwell and junk the team's 3-4 defensive scheme in favor of a 4-3 alignment under Monte Kiffin, the former linebackers coach of the Minnesota Vikings.

Fired, too, was defensive line coach John Pease, who had been with Mora since 1983 in the United States Football League.

These are radical changes by a normally conservative coach.

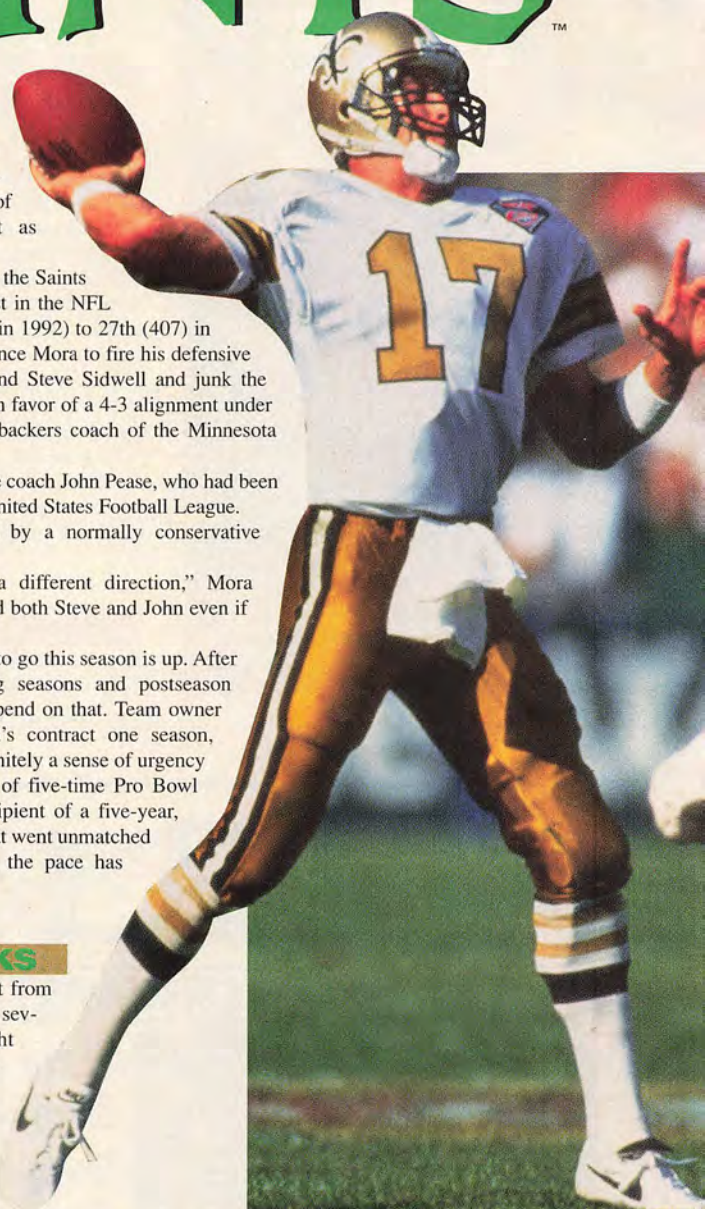
"I just wanted to go in a different direction," Mora explained. "Hell, I'd have fired both Steve and John even if we had won [last] year."

The direction Mora intends to go this season is up. After two consecutive non-winning seasons and postseason misses, his own job might depend on that. Team owner Tom Benson extended Mora's contract one season, through 1996, but there is definitely a sense of urgency in Mora's step. The addition of five-time Pro Bowl cornerback Eric Allen — recipient of a five-year, \$14.028-million offer sheet that went unmatched by Philadelphia — indicates the pace has quickened.

QUARTERBACKS

The acquisition of Jim Everett from the Los Angeles Rams for a seventh-round draft pick might have been the front-office coup of 1994. Everett enjoyed a banner season, completing 346 of 540 passes for 3,855 yards, 22 touchdowns and 18 interceptions. His QB rating (84.9 percent) placed him third among NFC quarterbacks and fifth league-wide. With each game, he seemed to gain confidence, which he sorely lacked during his final days in L.A.

Veteran Wade Wilson has been squeezed out of a back-



Jim Everett proved to be a Saint last year, throwing for 3,855 yards and 22 TDs.

MILESTONES

- ❖ Kicker Morten Andersen needs to score in each of the first 13 games to break the NFL mark for most consecutive games with a point. Former Bengal Jim Breech holds the record with a point in 186 straight games.
- ❖ Jim Everett needs 2,387 yards passing to become the 17th quarterback in NFL history to accumulate 30,000 yards. He enters 1995 with 27,613 yards.

POWER RATING

70

up role by the salary cap. The Saints saved \$500,000 by bringing in Timm Rosenbach, a former No. 1 supplemental pick of the Arizona Cardinals who has been out of the NFL for two years. Behind Rosenbach are journeyman Tom Hodson and second-year pro Doug Nussmeier, whose responsibilities in '95 will mirror those of '94 — watching, charting, learning.

RATING: 7

RUNNING BACKS

Mora is banking on Mario Bates taking charge at tailback. Bates, the team's second-round pick in '94, missed half of the season after running into a teammate's right fist at a local nightclub. That punch by fullback Lorenzo Neal sidelined Bates until midseason. A healthy Bates finished as the team's leading rusher with 579 yards and six touchdowns on 151 carries.

Backup Derek Brown had a solid year with 489 rushing yards and 428 receiving yards. This might be the last hurrah for Vaughn Dunbar, the team's No. 1 pick in 1992, who carried three times in '94 after missing '93 with a knee injury.

The addition of fullback Ray Zellars, a second-round pick out of Notre Dame, indicates all is not well at that position. Zellars, a quick, strong back, will be given every opportunity to beat out Neal and the oft-injured Brad Muster, who has spent more time on a conditioning bike working his hamstrings than on the football field.

RATING: 6

RECEIVERS

With wideouts Michael Haynes (77 catches, 985 yards, five TDs), Quinn Early (82-894-4), Torrance Small (49-719-5) and tight ends Irv Smith (41-330-3) and Wesley Walls (38-406-4), Mora has assembled the best receiving corps of his tenure.

The addition of Haynes in '94 helped open up a passing game that had lacked a big-play threat for nearly 15 years. Small developed into a clutch receiver last year, with 20 of his catches coming on third down. A fourth receiver needs to step up from among top second-year prospects Steve Rhem and Derrell Mitchell.

Smith and Walls proved to be key targets for Everett, who has restored life to a passing game that had shown none in several years.

RATING: 8

OFFENSIVE LINE

This is a solid group, led by first-time Pro Bowl left tackle William Roaf, who projects to become one of the game's all-time best. The Saints cut down their number of sacks by 27 in one season; they allowed 51 in '93 and only 24 in '94. How? The addition of center Jeff Uhlenhake from the Miami Dolphins, the return of Jim Dombrowski to left guard and the switching of tackles Richard Cooper and Roaf by first-year line coach John Matsko all contributed.

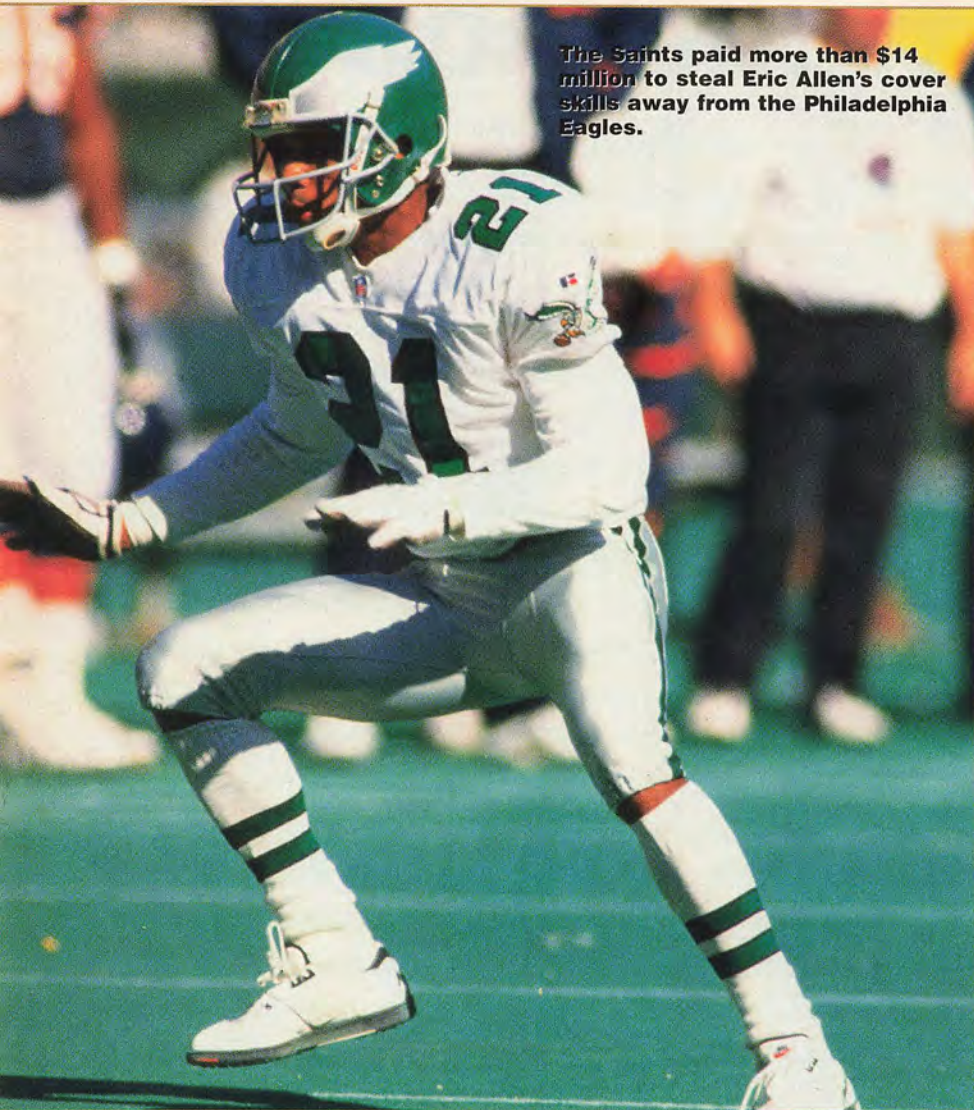
Depth is still a concern. That explains the drafting of Wisconsin tackle Mike Verstegen in the third round. Center/guard Craig Novitsky and

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
21	Eric Allen	CB	5-10/180	8	Arizona State
7	Morten Andersen	K	6-2/221	14	Michigan State
24	Mario Bates	RB	6-1/217	2	Arizona State
50	David Bavaro	LB	6-1/237	4	Syracuse
92	Mitchells Benson	DT	6-4/300	4	Texas Christian
9	Cary Blanchard	K	6-1/225	3	Oklahoma State
86	Kirk Botkin	TE	6-3/245	1	Arkansas
20	Derek Brown	RB	5-9/197	3	Nebraska
26	Vince Buck	DB	6-0/198	6	Central State (Ohio)
45	Israel Byrd	CB	5-11/184	1	Utah State
74	Herman Carroll	DE	6-4/265	2	Mississippi State
71	Richard Cooper	T	6-5/290	6	Tennessee
76	Jeff Davidson	C/G	6-5/305	5	Ohio State
28	Ralph Dawkins	RB	5-8/195	1	Louisville
56	Ernest Dixon	LB	6-1/250	2	South Carolina
72	Jim Dombrowski	G	6-5/300	10	Virginia
32	Vaughn Dunbar	RB	5-10/204	4	Indiana
89	Quinn Early	WR	6-0/190	8	Iowa
79	Tory Epps	DT	6-1/280	6	Memphis State
17	Jim Everett	QB	6-5/212	10	Purdue
40	James Fuller	S	5-11/208	3	Portland State
91	Robert Goff	DT	6-3/280	8	Auburn
30	Lance Gunn	S	6-3/222	2	Texas
98	Jim Hanna	DT	6-4/275	2	Louisville
52	Richard Harvey	LB	6-1/242	6	Tulane
81	Michael Haynes	WR	6-0/184	8	Northern Arizona
12	Adam Henry	WR	6-1/184	1	McNeese State
14	Tom Hodson	QB	6-3/195	4	LSU
33	Tyrone Hughes	CB	5-9/175	3	Nebraska
94	Joe Johnson	DE	6-4/285	2	Louisville
80	Tyrone Johnson	WR	5-11/171	2	Western State
27	Selwyn Jones	CB	6-0/185	4	Colorado State
19	Terrance Jones	WR	6-1/210	1	Tulane
68	Alan Kline	T	6-5/277	1	Ohio State
16	Lawann Latson	WR	5-8/170	1	NW Louisiana
43	Tyrone Legette	CB	5-9/177	4	Nebraska
46	Sean Lumpkin	S	6-0/206	4	Minnesota
93	Wayne Martin	DT	6-5/275	7	Arkansas
44	J.J. McCleskey	S	5-7/177	2	Tennessee
67	Andy McCollum	C/G	6-4/270	2	Toledo
88	Derrell Mitchell	WR	5-9/190	2	Texas Tech
15	Travis Moore	WR	6-0/187	1	Ball State
25	Brad Muster	FB	6-4/235	8	Stanford
22	Lorenzo Neal	FB	5-11/240	3	Fresno State
36	Derrick Ned	FB	6-1/220	3	Grambling State
4	Mike Nesbitt	P	6-2/180	1	New Mexico
60	Craig Novitsky	G	6-5/295	2	UCLA
13	Doug Nussmeier	QB	6-3/211	2	Idaho
35	Shane Pahukoa	S	6-2/202	2	Washington
70	Chris Port	G/T	6-5/295	5	Duke
59	Rufus Porter	LB	6-1/230	8	Southern
84	Steve Rhem	WR	6-2/212	2	Minnesota
77	William Roaf	T	6-5/300	3	Louisiana Tech
3	Timm Rosenbach	QB	6-1/215	5	Washington State
78	Tom Roth	C/G	6-5/285	2	Southern Illinois
83	Torrance Small	WR	6-3/201	4	Alcorn State
82	Irv Smith	TE	6-3/246	3	Notre Dame
37	Jimmy Spencer	CB	5-9/180	4	Florida
90	Israel Stanley	DT	6-3/260	1	Arizona State
99	Natu Tuotagalao	DE	6-4/275	6	California
54	Winfred Tubbs	LB	6-4/250	2	Texas
97	Renaldo Turnbull	DE	6-4/250	6	West Virginia
62	Jeff Uhlenhake	C	6-3/284	7	Ohio State
85	Wesley Walls	TE	6-5/250	7	Mississippi
65	Willie Williams	T	6-6/295	4	LSU
10	Klaus Wilmsmeyer	P	6-1/210	4	Louisville

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1	Mark Fields	LB	6-2/244	Washington State
2	Ray Zellars	FB	5-11/221	Notre Dame
3	Mike Verstegen	T	6-6/311	Wisconsin
4	Dameian Jeffries	DE	6-4/277	Alabama
5	William Strong	CB	5-10/191	North Carolina State
6	Lee DeRamus	WR	6-0/191	Wisconsin
7	Travis Davis	S	6-0/200	Notre Dame



The Saints paid more than \$14 million to steal Eric Allen's cover skills away from the Philadelphia Eagles.

tackle/tight end Willie Williams provide help.

RATING: 7

DEFENSIVE LINE

Kiffin welcomes three No. 1 draft picks to his 4-3 scheme — ends Renaldo Turnbull ('90) and Joe Johnson ('94) and tackle Wayne Martin ('89). Throw in journeyman Robert "Pig" Goff at the other tackle and it adds up to being a solid nucleus. Turnbull, whose size and quickness make him a tough matchup, is a proven pass rusher, though his sack total (6.5) was half of his '93 production (13). Martin and Johnson are solid against the run. Mora drafted Alabama end Dameian Jeffries in the third round, a project perhaps one or two years away from contributing.

RATING: 7

LINEBACKERS

The switch from a 3-4 to a 4-3 leaves the Saints with a brand new look and a bunch of new faces. Only one starter, second-year pro Winfred Tubbs, returns from last year.

Gone are Sam Mills (Carolina), James Williams (Jacksonville) and Darion Conner

(Carolina). And Turnbull now becomes an end. Replacing them are free agents Rufus Porter (Seattle), Richard Harvey (Denver) and No. 1 draft pick Mark Fields (Washington State). Mora isn't through tinkering with this position, and possibly could acquire another strongside linebacker before the season opener.

It's quite a different look for the Saints, who just a few years ago owned one of the most dominating linebacking corps (Mills, Pat Swilling, Rickey Jackson, Vaughn Johnson) in recent NFL history.

RATING: 6

SECONDARY

The addition of Allen, who is coming off a sub-par season with the Eagles, upgrades this area significantly and more than offsets the loss of free agent Vinnie Clark (Jacksonville). Allen will team with left corner Jimmy Spencer, who led the team with five interceptions in '94. Spencer better get ready to be picked on in '95. Free safety Vince Buck and strong safety Sean Lumpkin return as starters. Mora attempted to shore up this area in the draft with cornerback William Strong (fifth round) and safety Travis Davis (seventh).

Cornerbacks Tyrone Hughes (two fumbles returned for touchdowns in '94), Tyrone Legette

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	... KANSAS CITY	... Lost, 30-17
Sept. 11	... WASHINGTON	... Lost, 38-24
Sept. 18	... at Tampa Bay	... Won, 9-7
Sept. 25	... at San Francisco	... Lost, 24-13
Oct. 2	... N.Y. GIANTS	... Won, 27-22
Oct. 9	... at Chicago	... Lost, 17-7
Oct. 16	... SAN DIEGO	... Lost, 36-22
Oct. 23	... L.A. RAMS	... Won, 37-34
Nov. 6	... at Minnesota	... Lost, 21-20
Nov. 13	... ATLANTA	... Won, 33-32
Nov. 20	... at L.A. Raiders	... Lost, 24-19
Nov. 28	... SAN FRANCISCO	... Lost, 35-14
Dec. 4	... at L.A. Rams	... Won, 31-15
Dec. 11	... at Atlanta	... Won, 29-20
Dec. 19	... DALLAS	... Lost, 24-16
Dec. 24	... at Denver	... Won, 30-28

and Selwyn Jones provide decent depth.

RATING: 7

SPECIAL TEAMS

Historically, this area has been a strength for Mora. It features kicker Morten Andersen and Hughes, who has returned five punts and kick-offs for touchdowns the past two seasons.

Gone is punter Tommy Barnhardt (Carolina), and replacing him is Klaus Wilmsmeyer of the San Francisco 49ers. The Saints signed Cary Blanchard as an insurance policy in the event team officials are forced to ask Andersen to take a payout and he objects. Andersen counts \$965,000 against New Orleans' 1995 cap.

RATING: 8

DRAFT

The Saints selected the top two players at their positions in the first two rounds — linebacker Fields (13th overall) and fullback Zellars (44th). Fields will be given every opportunity to win the starting job in the middle; ditto for Zellars at fullback. Fields had only one year of starting experience in college, winning Pac-10 Defensive Player of the Year honors as a senior.

Wide receiver Lee DeRamus (sixth round), who missed the '94 season with a broken leg, could help, but probably not until '96. He was projected as a first- or second-round pick before the injury.

RATING: 7

COACHING

If Mora, a defensive-minded coach, wants a challenge, he's got one in trying to resurrect a once-proud defense from the ashes. During the Saints' glory years, they fielded solid defensive teams and average offensive teams. Last year, with the addition of Everett and Haynes, the offense was far superior to the defense. The Saints' success will depend on how well the old and new personnel take to Kiffin's 4-3 scheme.

RATING: 7

Brian Allee-Walsh writes for the New Orleans Times-Picayune.



ATLANTA FALCONS

'94 RECORD

7-9 (2-4 in Division)

COACH

June Jones, 2nd season with Falcons, 7-9

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1991 (Lost to Redskins, 24-7, in divisional semifinals)

HOME STADIUM

Georgia Dome, Atlanta (71,280, AstroTurf)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent signings: J.J. Birden, WR (K.C.); Darryl Talley, LB (Buf.); Nate Lewis, WR (Chi.); Dan Stryzinski, P (T.B.)

Free-agent losses: Andre Rison, WR (Cle.); Brett Maxie, S (Jack.)

Others: Eric Metcalf, RB (trade with Cle.); Mike Kenn, OT (retired); Bill Goldberg, DT (exp. draft, Car.); David Mims, WR (exp. draft, Car.)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Keith Armstrong (OLBs); Mouse Davis (QBs); Frank Gansz (asst. head coach/special teams); Joe Haering (def. coord.); Milt Jackson (asst. head coach/WRs); Tim Jorgensen (strength and conditioning); Bill Kollar (DL); Will Lewis (DBs); Bob Palcic (OL); Rod Rust (def. asst.); Ollie Wilson (RBs)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	CAROLINA, 1
Sept. 10	at San Francisco, 4
Sept. 17	at New Orleans, 1
Sept. 24	N.Y. JETS, 4
Oct. 1	NEW ENGLAND, 1
Oct. 8	Open Date
Oct. 12	at St. Louis, 8
Oct. 22	at Tampa Bay, 1
Oct. 29	DALLAS, 1
Nov. 5	DETROIT, 1
Nov. 12	at Buffalo, 1
Nov. 19	ST. LOUIS, 1
Nov. 26	at Arizona, 4
Dec. 3	at Miami, 1
Dec. 10	NEW ORLEANS, 1
Dec. 17	at Carolina, 1
Dec. 24	SAN FRANCISCO, 1
All times Eastern	

By TIM LUKE

The Atlanta Falcons had lost a big part of their offense to the Cleveland Browns in the offseason, so they decided to get a little something back in exchange: A slot back, a running back, a deep back — all in one.

After losing restricted free-agent receiver Andre Rison to the Browns, the Falcons one week later acquired the versatile Eric Metcalf from Cleveland. The trade included a swap of first-round draft picks, Atlanta's No. 10 for Cleveland's No. 26.

"We had to be real patient. Some other people got involved in the deal. But we got the guy that we wanted and still kept our No. 1 pick," second-year Falcons coach June Jones said. "We looked real closely at what we thought was going to be there at the 10th pick, and the more we looked at it the more there was a lot of uncertainty."

"We know exactly what Eric will do for us, so we're excited about getting him."

The Falcons, stung so many times in the draft, used the No. 26 pick on Florida State safety Devin Bush, a rather unpopular choice in Atlanta. Falcons fans thought the team was set at safety with Roger Harper, Kevin Ross, Rich Miano, Brad Edwards and Alton Montgomery and desperately needed a defensive lineman. They said Bush is too small for the NFL, that he'll just continue the Falcons' draft agonies.

So, if nothing else, with only two of the Falcons' last 14 first-round choices still on their roster and only one (Bob Whitfield) starting last year, Bush will play under a much heavier load than just his shoulder pads.



With one season in the run-and-shoot under his belt, George should be more comfortable and less interception prone.

MILESTONES

- ❖ The Falcons are entering their 30th season and will be seeking their fifth playoff berth.
- ❖ Norm Johnson ended the year with 14 straight field goals, and now needs 12 to tie his own personal record of 26 straight and 15 to tie the NFL record of 29 in a row.
- ❖ With 154 points, Johnson will crack the NFL's all-time Top 10 in scoring.

POWER RATING

66

QUARTERBACKS

In his first year in the Falcons' run-and-shoot, Jeff George was among the top seven NFL quarterbacks in yards (3,734), completions (322) and touchdowns (23), and set career-highs in eight different categories. But, just like throughout his tempestuous stay with the Indianapolis Colts, George was mercurial. When he's on, there are few passers any better. But when he's struggling, he bogs the offense.

In his first two games, George threw six touchdown passes and no interceptions. In his next six, he had six touchdowns passes and nine interceptions. Many of his 18 interceptions were the direct result of poor decisions spawned from the quick thinking demanded by Jones' offense and George's own overconfidence in his golden arm. The re-signing of Bobby Hebert means the Falcons have a reliable backup.

RATING: 7

RUNNING BACKS

With Jones calling the plays, Atlanta has dwelled mostly on the shoot in the run-and-shoot, averaging only 78 rushing yards per game and 257 passing. Running back Craig "Ironhead" Heyward rebounded with a strong 1994 campaign, averaging 4.3 yards per carry (183-779), but he's primarily a blocking back. Erric Pegram was let go to sign with Pittsburgh.

Metcalfe fancies himself a running back, but under Jones he'd better get used to starting plays from the slot or an inside receiver position. In Atlanta, the run is something you do while the coach figures out the next five pass plays.

RATING: 5

RECEIVERS

After much wringing of hands over the losses of Michael Haynes and Mike Pritchard, last year's corps played better. Terance Mathis was the team's biggest surprise. In four previous years with the New York Jets, his career-high was 28 catches. Last year, he had 111 receptions for 1,342 yards and 11 touchdowns, an incredible jump.

Metcalfe and former Kansas City Chiefs standout J.J. Birden should help make up for the loss of Rison. Metcalfe will work out of one slot, Mathis out of the other and Birden and second-year speedster Bert Emanuel out wide. "We'll utilize [Metcalfe] in our system more than he's ever been utilized since he's come into the league," Jones said.

RATING: 9

OFFENSIVE LINE

Mike Kenn may have been old, but he was still good. His retirement means the erratic Lincoln Kennedy, who lost his guard position to free agent Dave Richards, will be counted on heavily. Yet, in late April, the club was still trying to re-sign Richards.

While Jones gushed about third-year tackle Whitfield all season, the middle trio of Richards, center Roman Fortin and right guard Mike Zandofsky struggled against power rushers, yielding 37 sacks.

RATING: 6

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
68	Mel Agee	DT	6-5/300	4	Illinois
93	Dunstan Anderson	DL	6-4/270	2	Tulsa
32	Jamal Anderson	RB	5-10/240	2	Utah
92	Lester Archambeau	DE	6-5/275	6	Stanford
89	J.J. Birden	WR	5-9/170	7	Oregon
96	George Brewer	DT	6-5/290	1	Savannah State
19	Corey Dixon	WR	5-7/155	1	Nebraska
56	Chris Coleman	DE	6-5/275	11	Pittsburgh
54	Mitch Donahue	DE	6-3/265	5	Wyoming
27	Brad Edwards	S	6-2/207	8	South Carolina
87	Bert Emanuel	WR	5-10/180	2	Rice
33	Bobby Evans	DB	6-2/200	1	S. Arkansas
65	Roman Fortin	G/C	6-5/295	6	San Diego State
67	Moe Gardner	NT	6-2/265	5	Illinois
1	Jeff George	QB	6-4/215	6	Illinois
50	Ron George	LB	6-2/235	3	Stanford
53	Dwayne Gordon	LB	6-1/240	3	New Hampshire
47	Roger Harper	S	6-2/225	3	Ohio State
62	Leonard Harris	WR	5-8/162	10	Texas Tech
3	Bobby Hebert	QB	6-4/215	10	NW Louisiana
34	Craig Heyward	RB	5-11/260	8	Pittsburgh
95	Pierce Holt	DT	6-4/275	8	Angelo State
39	Eric Jack	CB	5-10/173	2	New Mexico
44	D.J. Johnson	CB	6-0/190	7	Kentucky
9	Norm Johnson	K	6-2/202	14	UCLA
8	Preston Jones	QB	6-3/223	1	Georgia
75	Lincoln Kennedy	G/T	6-6/330	3	Washington
7	Perry Klein	QB	6-2/218	2	CW Post
88	Harper LeBel	TE	6-4/255	7	Colorado State
80	Nate Lewis	WR	5-11/195	6	Oregon Tech
86	Mitch Lyons	TE	6-4/265	3	Michigan State
81	Terance Mathis	WR	5-10/180	6	New Mexico
57	Clay Matthews	LB	5-2/245	18	USC
21	Eric Metcalfe	WR/RB	5-10/168	7	Texas
38	Rich Miano	S	6-1/200	11	Hawaii
97	Maurice Miller	LB	6-3/230	1	Wake Forest
22	Alton Montgomery	S	6-0/209	5	Houston
66	Todd Norman	T	6-5/300	1	Notre Dame
64	Jeff Pahuoka	G/T	6-2/298	4	Washington
26	Anthony Phillips	CB	6-2/207	2	Tex. A&M (King.)
62	Dave Richards	G	6-5/315	7	UCLA
51	Jim Ritcher	G	6-3/273	16	NC State
15	Joe Rogers	WR	5-7/161	1	Texas Southern
36	Kevin Ross	S	5-9/185	12	Temple
83	Ricky Sanders	WR	5-11/180	10	SW Texas State
37	Elbert Shelley	CB	5-11/190	9	Arkansas State
90	Chuck Smith	DE	6-2/257	4	Tennessee
84	Darryl Spencer	WR	5-8/172	2	Miami (Fla.)
4	Dan Stryzinski	P	6-2/200	6	Indiana
99	Darryl Talley	LB	6-4/235	13	West Virginia
24	Terry Taylor	CB	5-10/185	11	Southern Illinois
52	Ken Tippins	LB	6-1/235	7	Mid. Tenn. State
61	Robbie Tobeck	C	6-4/292	2	Washington State
58	Jessie Tuggle	LB	5-11/230	9	Valdosta State
2	Scott Tyner	K	6-1/189	2	Oklahoma State
35	Tony Vinson	RB	6-1/229	1	Towson State
45	Darnell Walker	CB	5-8/168	3	Oklahoma
70	Bob Whitfield	T	6-5/300	4	Stanford
69	Thomas Williams	DE	6-3/290	1	Wyoming
72	Mike Zandofsky	C/G	6-2/305	7	Washington

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT/WT	SCHOOL
1	Devin Bush	SS	5-11/205	Florida State
2	Ronald Davis	CB	5-10/190	Tennessee
3	Lorenzo Styles	LB	6-1/244	Ohio State
5	Roell Preston	WR	5-10/187	Mississippi
6	Travis Hall	DE	6-5/278	BYU
7	John Burrough	DT	6-5/265	Wyoming



Former Cleveland back Eric Metcalf will be a valuable weapon in June Jones' arsenal.

DEFENSIVE LINE

The mixture of Chuck Smith, Pierce Holt, Moe Gardner, Lester Archambeau, Mel Agee and Chris Doleman was somewhat disappointing, though it wasn't Smith's fault. In his second season, Smith emerged as perhaps the game's finest young end. He led the team with 11 sacks and 32 pressures before tearing an anterior cruciate ligament in his knee in Week 15 at Green Bay.

So gutsy was Smith that he actually returned and played some against the Packers. But that also says something about the Falcons' other personnel. Doleman wreaked more havoc in his own locker room than against opponents. The Falcons believe Doleman will be ready for 1995 after offseason surgery to repair sheared tendons in his right foot. They aren't sure when Smith will return after his knee surgery.

RATING: 5

LINEBACKERS

The combination of Pro Bowler Jessie Tuggle and the newly acquired Darryl Talley (Buffalo) could be lethal. Tuggle is the game's most underrated star and the pillar here. His team-high 195 tackles left him only five shy of his third 200-tackle season since 1990. From his new middle 'backer spot, he may make 230 tackles. Tuggle already is the NFL record-holder for career

touchdowns on fumble recoveries (four).

Talley will bring immense talent and the outspoken leadership that the sometimes reserved Tuggle doesn't provide. At 34, Talley should have one or two more good seasons left in him, which is why the Falcons gave him a two-year deal to play the right side. The Falcons also drafted Ohio State's Lorenzo Styles in the third round.

RATING: 8

SECONDARY

The Falcons have the run-and-shoot and are known as a prodigious passing team, right? Well, opponents out-passed the Falcons 259 yards to 257. The secondary was good at the big play (22 interceptions) but suffered in coverage. It yielded 26 touchdowns, 11.4 yards per catch and a whopping completion percentage of 62.8. Those numbers are why the Falcons' first two draft picks were Bush and cornerback Ronald Davis of Tennessee.

RATING: 5

SPECIAL TEAMS

The Falcons' acquisition of Metcalf and pinpoint punter Dan Stryzinski suddenly transforms Atlanta's special teams from one of the league's

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	...at Detroit	...Lost, 31-28 (OT)
Sept. 11	...L.A. RAMS	...Won, 31-13
Sept. 18	...KANSAS CITY	...Lost, 30-10
Sept. 25	...at Washington	...Won, 27-20
Oct. 2	...at L.A. Rams	...Won, 8-5
Oct. 9	...TAMPA BAY	...Won, 34-13
Oct. 16	...SAN FRANCISCO	...Lost, 42-3
Oct. 23	...at L.A. Raiders	...Lost, 30-17
Nov. 6	...SAN DIEGO	...Won, 10-9
Nov. 13	...at New Orleans	...Lost, 33-32
Nov. 20	...at Denver	...Lost, 32-28
Nov. 27	...PHILADELPHIA	...Won, 28-21
Dec. 4	...at San Francisco	...Lost, 50-14
Dec. 11	...NEW ORLEANS	...Lost, 29-20
Dec. 18	...at Green Bay	...Lost, 21-17
Dec. 24	...ARIZONA	...Won, 10-6

worst to one of its best. Kicker Norm Johnson is Mr. Consistency, ending the season with 14 straight field goals. But an abdominal muscle strain shortened his kickoffs by 10 yards or more, and the Falcons' opponents almost always had better field position than they did. Kick coverage slipped because of short punts, short kicks and penalties. The big play, a staple under former returner Deion Sanders, was non-existent. Enter Mr. Metcalf.

RATING: 8

DRAFT

The Falcons didn't appropriately address their biggest need: The defensive line. Bush, at 5-foot-11, 208 pounds, appears awfully small to become the run enforcer a strong safety needs to be. His 4.5 speed is only average for a defensive back, and he is noted as an attitude-filled roamer who prefers the big hit over interceptions.

Drafting Davis in the second round was a gamble and Styles could turn out to be a third-round find, yet the lingering taste from the draft for the Falcons has to be the fact that the No. 10 pick they traded to the Browns for Metcalf was in turn traded to division rival San Francisco, which found its heir apparent to Jerry Rice by drafting J.J. Stokes.

RATING: 6

COACHING

This team appeared better at the beginning of last season than at the end. Why did it regress? Perhaps because Jones made a few on-field tactical errors for which he was raked over the radio call-in coals. Perhaps because some of the club's spirit was sapped in dubious game-turning calls by officials in consecutive weeks at New Orleans and Denver. Or perhaps because of distractions from Doleman and Rison and increasing frustration with a sputtering offense and former defensive coordinator Jim Bates' defensive scheme. Still, the Falcons finished a game better than they were the year before. That's nothing special, but at least it's a decent start for Jones.

RATING: 7

Tim Luke covers the Falcons for the Greenville (S.C.) News.



ST. LOUIS RAMS

'94 RECORD

4-12 (0-6 in Division)

COACH

Rich Brooks, 1st season with Rams

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

1989 (Lost to 49ers, 30-3, in NFC Championship game)

HOME STADIUM

Busch Stadium, St. Louis (56,000, artificial), until mid-October; new domed stadium (65,000, artificial) still unnamed

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent signings: Dwayne White, G (NYJ); Alexander Wright, WR (L.A.); Carlos Jenkins, LB (Minn.); Anthony Parker, CB (Minn.); Keith McCants, LB (Ariz.)

Free-agent losses: Flipper Anderson, WR (Ind.); Chris Chandler, QB (Hou.); Marquez Pope, CB (S.F.); Tom Newberry, G (Pitt.)

Others: Howard Griffith, RB (selected by Car. in exp. draft); Richard Buchanan, WR (selected by Car. in exp. draft)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Nick Aliotti (safeties); Steve Brown (def. assistant/quality control); Chris Clausen (strength and conditioning); Steve Greatwood (TEs/OL); Mike Martz (WRs); Derek Pollard (DL); Dan Radakovich (OL); John Ramsdell (off. assistant/quality control); Jack Reilly (off. coord./QBs); Johnny Roland (assistant head coach/RBs); Dick Selcer (LBs); Wayne Sevier (special teams); Willie Shaw (def. coord./CBs)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3	at Green Bay, 1
Sept. 10	NEW ORLEANS, 1
Sept. 17	at Carolina, 1
Sept. 24	CHICAGO, 1
Oct. 1	at Indianapolis, 1
Oct. 8	Open Date
Oct. 12	ATLANTA, 8
Oct. 22	SAN FRANCISCO, 4
Oct. 29	at Philadelphia, 1
Nov. 5	at New Orleans, 1
Nov. 12	CAROLINA, 1
Nov. 19	at Atlanta, 1
Nov. 26	at San Francisco, 4
Dec. 3	at N.Y. Jets, 1
Dec. 10	BUFFALO, 1
Dec. 17	WASHINGTON, 1
Dec. 24	MIAMI, 4
All times Eastern	

By JIM THOMAS

New coach. New home address. Same old Rams?

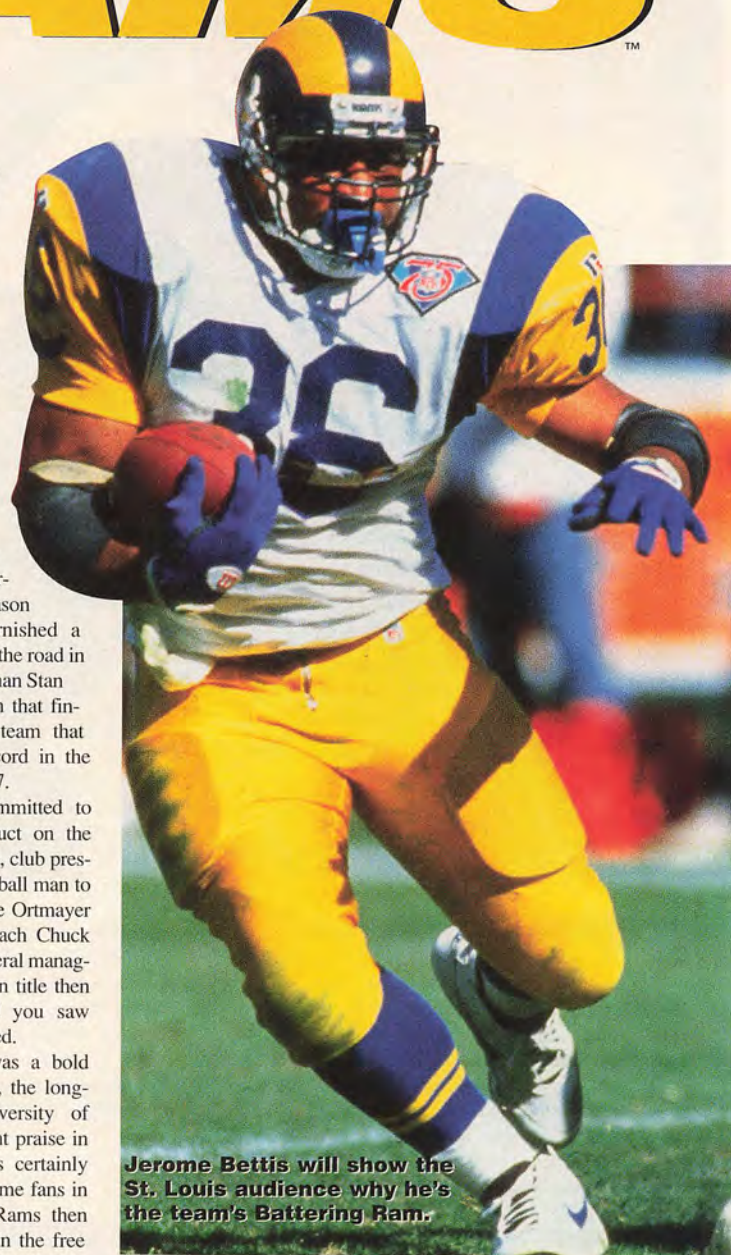
That's the question of the hour for football fans in St. Louis, the new home of the Rams. Waiting in St. Louis is a new \$260 million domed stadium, a stadium lease so lucrative some have called it the sports deal of the century for the Rams. St. Louis fans also have coughed up more than \$70 million in personal seat license money, which is a one-time fee giving purchasers the right to buy a season ticket. St. Louis even furnished a minority owner from just up the road in Columbia, Mo. — businessman Stan Kroenke. All this for a team that finished 4-12 last season, a team that shares the NFL's worst record in the '90s with Cincinnati at 23-57.

But the Rams seem committed to putting a competitive product on the field in St. Louis. For starters, club president John Shaw hired a football man to be general manager — Steve Ortmyer of the Raiders. Deposed coach Chuck Knox had performed the general manager's role previously, if not in title then certainly in function. And you saw where it got him. Unemployed.

Ortmyer's first move was a bold one. He hired Rich Brooks, the longtime head coach at the University of Oregon. This drew consistent praise in football circles, but Brooks certainly wasn't the "name" coach some fans in St. Louis hoped for. The Rams then became aggressive players in the free agent market, signing four starters: offensive guard Dwayne White (Jets), linebacker Carlos Jenkins (Vikings), cornerback Anthony Parker (Vikings) and wide receiver Alexander Wright (Raiders). And they kept some of their own, re-signing linebacker Roman Phifer, wide receiver Jessie Hester and running back Johnny Bailey.

QUARTERBACKS

It's a make-or-break season for Chris Miller — that's if Miller doesn't break down first. Miller's career has been revived now that he's been reunited with Brooks, his former coach at Oregon. When



Jerome Bettis will show the St. Louis audience why he's the team's Battering Ram.

MILESTONES

- Jerome Bettis is trying to become only the second player in Rams history, and the first since Eric Dickerson in the mid 1980s, to post three consecutive 1,000-yard rushing seasons.
- If Jackie Slater returns for another season, he should move into third place on the NFL's all-time games played list. He currently is fourth with 258 games; Jan Stenerud is third with 263.

POWER RATING
65

healthy, Miller is one of the league's better quarterbacks. He made the Pro Bowl in 1991. Trouble is, that's the last year he was healthy. He has played in only 24 of 48 regular-season games since then. Last season, Miller completed 173 of 317 passes for 2,104 yards, but missed three games with a pinched nerve in his right shoulder. He also suffered three concussions.

Things get dizzier behind Miller. Chris Chandler, a part-time starter a year ago, signed with Houston. That leaves Tommy Maddox, who has thrown only 141 NFL passes, and Jamie Martin, who has yet to attempt an NFL pass.

RATING: 5

RUNNING BACKS

Jerome Bettis, a.k.a. the Battering Ram, became the battered Ram last season. As injuries took their toll on the offensive line, opposing defenses teed off on Bettis. After rushing for 814 yards in the Rams' first nine games, including four 100-yard outings, he managed only 211 yards the final seven games. Bettis, a 243-pound bruiser from Notre Dame, managed his second 1,000-yard campaign in as many NFL seasons. But just barely. He finished with 1,025 yards, but averaged just 3.2 yards per carry. Bettis carried the ball 319 times last season and the Rams plan to lighten his load a little this season. Look for Bailey, who led the team in receptions (58) but carried only 11 times, to get the ball more often.

RATING: 7

RECEIVERS

When the Rams lost Flipper Anderson to free agency, Ortmayer went back to his old club to sign Wright, a speedster who caught only 16 passes last season for the Raiders. He'll have to do much better in St. Louis if the Rams are going to keep defenses from ganging up on Bettis. The Rams think second-year man Isaac Bruce (21 catches, 372 yards) is ready to shine. Bruce was coming on last season before missing the last four games with a knee injury. If Bruce is not ready, there's reliable veteran Jessie Hester (45 catches, 644 yards, three TDs), rookie prospect Lovell Pinkney of Texas and Todd Kinchen (23 catches, 352 yards, three TDs) in the wings.

RATING: 5

OFFENSIVE LINE

Five Rams blockers, four of whom were starters, missed 32 games because of injury last season. But even at full strength the line probably wasn't good enough. The new Rams regime made upgrading the offensive line a top offseason priority. White, signed to a five-year, \$10 million deal, is a superb run-blocker who will start at right guard. Second-round draft picks Zach Wiegert of Nebraska and Jesse James of Mississippi State could compete for starting jobs right away. Second-year tackle Wayne Gandy, who had his rough moments last season, will be tried on the left side. Bern Brostek has Pro Bowl potential at center. That leaves holdovers Keith Loney and Leo Goeas fighting for the left guard spot.

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
77	Darryl Ashmore	T	6-7/300	4	Northwestern
21	Johnny Bailey	RB	5-8/180	6	Texas A&I
28	Robert Bailey	CB	5-9/176	5	Miami (Fla.)
71	Chuck Belin	G	6/2/312	3	Wisconsin
36	Jerome Bettis	RB	5-11/243	3	Notre Dame
33	James Bostic	RB	5-11/230	2	Auburn
83	Rickey Brady	TE	6-4/246	1	Oklahoma
88	Chris Brantley	WR	5-10/180	2	Rutgers
45	Steve Brooks	TE	6-5/245	1	Occidental
61	Bern Brostek	C	6-3/300	6	Washington
80	Isaac Bruce	WR	6-0/168	2	Memphis State
51	Blair Bush	C	6-3/275	18	Washington
54	Brett Collins	LB	6-1/234	4	Washington
56	Shane Conlan	LB	6-3/235	9	Penn State
29	Dexter Davis	CB	5-10/184	5	Clemson
84	Troy Drayton	TE	6-3/255	3	Penn State
67	Ronald Edwards	T	6-5/311	3	North Carolina A&T
75	D'Marco Farr	DT	6-1/270	2	Washington
70	Wayne Gandy	T	6-4/289	2	Auburn
90	Sean Gilbert	DT	6-4/315	4	Pittsburgh
79	Leo Goeas	G	6-4/300	6	Hawaii
86	Jessie Hester	WR	5-11/175	10	Florida State
57	Thomas Hornco	LB	6-0/245	3	Northwestern
31	Steve Israel	CB	5-11/186	4	Pittsburgh
49	Yonnie Jackson	TE	6-2/260	1	USC
50	Carlos Jenkins	LB	6-3/217	5	Michigan State
72	Clarence Jones	T	6-6/280	5	Maryland
94	Ernest Jones	DE	6-2/270	2	Oregon
98	Jimmie Jones	DT	6-4/276	6	Miami (Fla.)
52	Joe Kelly	LB	6-2/235	10	Washington
81	Todd Kinchen	WR	5-11/187	4	LSU
25	J.R. Kors	S	6-0/200	4	Long Beach State
5	Sean Landetta	P	6-0/210	11	Towson State
34	Tim Lester	RB	5-9/215	4	Eastern Kentucky
64	Keith Loney	G	6-3/330	3	Kansas
41	Todd Lyght	CB	6-0/186	5	Notre Dame
35	Keith Lyle	S	6-4/204	2	Virginia
8	Tommy Maddox	QB	6-4/204	4	UCLA
53	Chris Martin	LB	6-2/241	13	Auburn
9	Jamie Martin	QB	6-2/215	2	Weber State
91	Keith McCants	DE	6-3/265	6	Alabama
87	Ron Middleton	TE	6-2/262	10	Auburn
12	Chris Miller	QB	6-2/212	9	Oregon
26	Anthony Newman	S	6-0/199	9	Oregon
95	Brad Ottis	DE	6-4/272	2	Wayne State
27	Anthony Parker	CB	5-10/181	6	Arizona State
62	Roosevelt Patterson	G	6-3/315	1	Alabama
62	Roman Phifer	LB	6-2/230	5	UCLA
48	Jim Price	TE	6-4/247	4	Stanford
93	Gerald Robinson	DE	6-3/280	8	Auburn
92	David Rocker	DT	6-4/267	5	Auburn
59	Henry Rolling	LB	6-2/225	9	Nevada-Reno
82	Jermaine Ross	WR	5-11/192	1	Purdue
78	Jackie Slater	T	6-4/285	20	Jackson State
60	Fred Stokes	DE	6-3/274	9	Georgia Southern
68	Dwayne White	G	6-2/315	6	Alcorn State
86	Jay Williams	DE	6-3/266	1	Wake Forest
89	Alexander Wright	WR	6-0/195	6	Auburn
32	Toby Wright	S	5-11/203	2	Nebraska
76	Robert Young	DE	6-6/273	5	Mississippi State
10	Tony Zendejas	K	5-8/165	11	Nevada-Reno
63	Lance Zeno	G	6-4/279	3	UCLA

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1	Kevin Carter	DE	6-5/274	Florida
2A	Zach Wiegert	T	6-4/311	Nebraska
2B	Jesse James	T	6-4/318	Mississippi State
3	Steve McLaughlin	K	6-0/167	Arizona
4	Lovell Pinkney	TE	6-4/248	Texas
5	Mike Scurlock	DB	5-10/197	Arizona
7A	Gerald McBurrows	DB	5-11/188	Kansas
7B	Herman O'Berry	DB	5-9/195	Oregon
7C	Bronzell Miller	DE	6-3/247	Utah
7D	Johnny Thomas	WR	5-10/173	Arizona State



Tackle Sean Gilbert will team with top pick Kevin Carter on one of the league's best, young defensive lines.

Despite offseason elbow surgery, Jackie Slater — the Eternal Ram — is contemplating a return for his 20th NFL season.

RATING: 6

DEFENSIVE LINE

The Rams had only 26 sacks last season, tying for the fourth-lowest total in the league. No. 1 draft pick Kevin Carter, an end from Florida, should help increase that total. He had 11½ sacks last season for the Gators. A healthy Sean Gilbert and Jimmie Jones at the tackle spots wouldn't hurt, either. Both played hurt last season, then underwent offseason surgery. Gilbert had a shoulder repaired; Jones had an ankle cleaned up. Robert Young, who registered a team-high 6½ sacks in '94, figures to start at the other end spot. D'Marco Farr and free agent pickup Keith McCants should add quality depth.

RATING: 8

LINEBACKERS

Shane Conlan is a run-stuffing rock in the middle, while Phifer and free agent Jenkins are young and rangy. Retaining Phifer, a four-year veteran with Pro Bowl potential, was a key to the Rams' off-season strategy. He's an every-down player who might blitz more this season. The undersized Jenkins (217 pounds) may also be turned loose in pass-rush situations. His acquisition is a prime example of Brooks' desire to upgrade team speed.

RATING: 7

SECONDARY

The Rams lost two starters from what was a decent group last season. Corner Darryl Henley was convicted for his role in a cocaine trafficking ring. Safety Marquez Pope, a restricted free agent, signed with San Francisco. The Rams had 14 interceptions last season; only seven teams had fewer. The Rams signed Parker to replace Henley. Todd Lyght, a starter in all four of his NFL seasons, returns at the other

1994 RESULTS

Sept. 4	...ARIZONA	...Won, 14-12
Sept. 11	...at Atlanta	...Lost, 31-13
Sept. 18	...SAN FRANCISCO	...Lost, 34-19
Sept. 25	...at Kansas City	...Won, 16-0
Oct. 2	...ATLANTA	...Lost, 8-5
Oct. 9	...at Green Bay	...Lost, 24-17
Oct. 16	...N.Y. GIANTS	...Won, 17-10
Oct. 23	...at New Orleans	...Lost, 37-34
Nov. 6	...DENVER	...Won, 27-21
Nov. 13	...L.A. RAIDERS	...Lost, 20-17
Nov. 20	...at San Francisco	...Lost, 31-27
Nov. 27	...at San Diego	...Lost, 31-17
Dec. 4	...NEW ORLEANS	...Lost, 31-15
Dec. 11	...at Tampa Bay	...Lost, 24-14
Dec. 18	...at Chicago	...Lost, 27-13
Dec. 24	...WASHINGTON	...Lost, 24-21

corner. Second-year men Toby Wright and Keith Lyle will start at the safeties.

RATING: 6

SPECIAL TEAMS

The Rams have ample return candidates. Bailey and Kinchen are better-than-average punt returners. David Lang and Kinchen were among the NFC's top 10 kickoff returners. The problem last year came on kickoff and punt coverage, where the Rams yielded a combined five touchdowns on returns.

The Rams drafted Steve McLaughlin in the third round to improve distance and hang time on kickoffs, and he will push placekicker Tony Zen-dejas for his job. Sean Landetta had a career year, leading the NFL in punting average (44.8 yards).

RATING: 7

DRAFT

The Rams were delighted to find Carter available when they selected sixth in the first round. If there was a blueprint for the prototype defensive end, it would be Carter. He stands 6-foot-5, weighs 274 pounds and runs the 40 in a brisk 4.8 seconds. The Rams also were happy to find Wiegert and James available in the second round. Pinkney could be a real find if he puts his past off-the-field problems behind him. He is built like a tight end at 6-4, 248, but runs like a wide receiver (4.5 in the 40).

RATING: 8

COACHING

Brooks is a solid guy, a decent person, and knows the game. But after 18 years in the college ranks, can he cut it in the NFL? Brooks, who will be 54 years old before the Rams' opening kickoff in 1995, has spent only four years in the NFL as an assistant, and that was 20 years ago. His adjustment to the NFL is one of the keys to any Rams' success this season.

RATING: 6

Jim Thomas covers the Rams for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.



CAROLINA

'94 RECORD

None

COACH

Dom Capers, 1st season with Carolina

LAST PLAYOFF APP.

None

HOME STADIUM

1995 season: Memorial Stadium, Clemson, S.C., (81,000, grass)

KEY TRANSACTIONS

Free-agent signings: Frank Reich, QB (Buf.); Lamar Lathon, LB (Hou.); Sam Mills, LB (N.O.); Bubba McDowell, DB (Hou.); Don Beebe, WR (Buf.); Mike Fox, DL (NYG); John Kasay, K (Sea.); Tommy Barnhardt, P (N.O.); Gerald Williams, DE (Pitt.); Randy Baldwin, RB-KR (Clev.); Derrick Graham, OT (K.C.); Darion Conner, LB (N.O.); Frank Stams, LB (Cle.)

Expansion draft: Mark Carrier, WR (Clev.); Tim McKyer, CB (Pitt.); Derrick Lassic, RB (Dal.); Jack Trudeau, QB (NYJ); Greg Kragen, DT (K.C.); Harry Boatwain, OT (S.F.); Paul Butcher, LB (Ind.)

ASSISTANT COACHES

Don Breaux (TEs); George Catavolos (DBs); Billy Davis (OLBs); Vic Fangio (defensive coordinator); Cary Godette (DL); Chick Harris (RBs); Jim McNally (offensive line); Chip Morton (strength and cond.); Joe Pendry (offensive coordinator, QBs); Brad Seely (special teams); Kevin Steele (LBs); Richard Williamson (WRs)

1995 Schedule

Sept. 3 at Atlanta, 1
 Sept. 10.....at Buffalo, 1
 Sept. 17.....ST. LOUIS, 1
 Sept. 24.....Open Date
 Oct. 1.....TAMPA BAY
 Oct. 8.....at Chicago, 1
 Oct. 15.....N.Y. JETS, 4
 Oct. 22.....NEW ORLEANS, 1
 Oct. 29.....at New England, 1
 Nov. 5.....at San Francisco, 4
 Nov. 12.....at St. Louis, 1
 Nov. 19.....ARIZONA, 1
 Nov. 26.....at New Orleans, 8
 Dec. 3.....INDIANAPOLIS, 1
 Dec. 10.....SAN FRANCISCO, 1
 Dec. 17.....ATLANTA, 1
 Dec. 24.....at Washington, 4
 All times Eastern

By CHARLES CHANDLER

Moments after the Carolina Panthers selected Penn State quarterback Kerry Collins with the fifth pick in the 1995 NFL Draft, team owner Jerry Richardson spoke by telephone with the player around whom the expansion team will be built.

"Young man," Richardson said, "welcome to the Carolina Panthers. Are you familiar with the Lombardi Trophy?"

"Yes I am," Collins said.

"Have you thought about it yet?" Richardson said.

"I just did," answered Collins.

The Lombardi Trophy, of course, is awarded to the Super Bowl winner. To say that Richardson fancies it would be an understatement.

Three days after he was awarded an expansion team in October 1993, Richardson stood before a crowd of 50,000 at a Charlotte pep rally and promised a Super Bowl victory within 10 years.

Though the early years will be difficult, he expects to get there sooner than that and has placed the team in the experienced hands of President Mike McCormack and General Manager Bill Polian. Polian may be hungrier than Richardson; he built Buffalo into a four-time Super Bowl participant, but the Bills never won the title.

The Panthers built their first team in three phases: They selected mostly low-paid players in the expansion allocation draft to save their money for free agency; they signed more unrestricted free agents than any other club, including linebacker Lamar Lathon, quarterback Frank Reich and safety Bubba McDowell; and they traded the No. 1 pick in the college draft — and with it the opportunity to draft super-back Ki-Jana Carter — to Cincinnati. After trading up twice, they wound up with four of the first 36 picks in the draft.

Carolina is off to a solid start. Its special teams look good, its defense fair and its offense not so good. Polian said coach Dom Capers should be named coach of the year if he wins four games.

He just might do that, but the Lombardi Trophy is still far, far away.



Former Penn State QB Kerry Collins hopes to deliver Carolina a Super Bowl victory within 10 years.

MILESTONES

- Carolina will attempt in its Sept. 3 opener at Atlanta to become the first NFL expansion team since the 1961 Minnesota Vikings to open its inaugural season with a victory.
- If the Panthers sell out all their home games at Clemson's Memorial Stadium (capacity 81,000), they'll set an NFL single-season attendance record.

POWER RATING
56

QUARTERBACKS

While the Panthers wait for Collins to develop, former Buffalo backup Frank Reich will run the team. Reich is best known for leading two of the greatest comebacks in football history: In college, he brought Maryland back from a 31-0 deficit to beat Miami (Fla.) 42-40; in the 1992 NFL playoffs, he rallied Buffalo from 32 points behind to beat the Houston Oilers 41-38 in overtime. Though he's entering his 11th season, Reich has started only 10 games. If Carolina wants a more seasoned veteran, it could opt for Jack Trudeau, who started 51 games in nine years with Indianapolis and the New York Jets. But his 66 interceptions outnumber his 42 touchdown passes. Sixth-round pick Jerry Colquitt of Tennessee or former Dolphins backup Doug Pederson could be the No. 3 quarterback if Trudeau doesn't stick.

RATING: 5

RUNNING BACKS

The Panthers don't have a feature back. Most likely, they'll use a rotation of Randy Baldwin, Tony Smith and Derrick Lassic. Baldwin led Cleveland in rushing last preseason but couldn't crack the Browns lineup in the regular season, though he did lead the AFC in kickoff returns. Smith was Atlanta's first-round pick in 1991 but was released by the Falcons last season. Lassic is best known as the Dallas fill-in during Emmitt Smith's 1993 contract holdout. He may have the most potential of the three if he can come back from a serious knee injury. The fullback will probably be Howard Griffith, who started 10 games last season for the Rams.

RATING: 3

RECEIVERS

This is hardly the strength of the team. The Panthers lack speed and a gamebreaker. Ex-Brown Mark Carrier (coming off a disappointing 29-catch season) is a dependable veteran, and Don Beebe will get the chance to be the main deep threat. Beebe's former Buffalo teammate Pete Metzelaars has proven his reliability at tight end (147 catches the past three seasons), but he's 35. Except for Willie Green, none of the backups have any substantial experience.

RATING: 4

OFFENSIVE LINE

The middle of the line is weak, but at least the Panthers have bookend tackles they really like. Left tackle Derrick Graham was signed as a free agent after starting 12 games last season for Kansas City. First-round draft pick Blake Brockermeyer already is a fixture at right tackle; the Panthers rated him just below Jacksonville rookie star Tony Boselli. Center Curtis Whitley has never started, and guard Harry Boatwain struggled as a 49ers backup.

RATING: 4

DEFENSIVE LINE

The NFL was stunned by the five-year, \$9 million deal Carolina gave ex-Giants defensive end

TEAM ROSTER

NO.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	YRS. PRO	SCHOOL
23	Randy Baldwin	RB	5-10/216	5	Mississippi
6	Tommy Barnhardt	P	6-2/207	9	North Carolina
54	Carlton Bailey	LB	6-3/235	8	North Carolina
42	Eric Ball	RB	6-2/220	7	UCLA
82	Don Beebe	WR	5-11/183	7	Chadron State
77	Harry Boatwain	T	6-4/295	5	New Haven
40	Cary Brabham	DB	6-0/195	2	SMU
26	Dewell Brewer	RB	5-8/199	2	Oklahoma
11	Richard Buchanan	WR	5-10/178	3	Northwestern
53	Paul Butcher	LB	6-0/240	8	Wayne State
83	Mark Carrier	WR	6-0/185	9	Nicholls State
44	Bob Christian	RB	5-10/225	3	Northwestern
18	Greg Clifton	WR	6-0/178	3	Johnson C. Smith
56	Darion Conner	LB	6-2/242	6	Jackson State
52	Matt Elliott	C/G	6-3/294	3	Michigan
79	Mike Finn	T	6-5/275	3	Ark-Pine Bluff
36	Fred Foggie	DB	6-0/200	4	Minnesota
93	Mike Fox	DE	6-6/288	6	West Virginia
34	Eddie Fuller	RB	5-9/198	6	LSU
54	Dave Garnett	LB	6-2/219	3	Stanford
35	Judd Garrett	RB	6-1/214	3	Princeton
74	Derrick Graham	T	6-4/315	6	Appalachian State
86	Willie Green	WR	6-4/188	5	Mississippi
33	Howard Griffith	FB	6-0/226	3	Illinois
84	Eric Guliford	WR	5-8/165	3	Arizona State
24	Alan Haller	CB	5-11/185	3	Michigan State
80	Steve Hawkins	WR	6-5/210	2	Western Michigan
89	Kurt Haws	TE	6-5/248	2	Utah
4	John Kasay	K	5-10/189	5	Georgia
71	Greg Kragen	NT	6-3/265	11	Utah State
32	Derrick Lassic	RB	5-10/188	3	Alabama
57	Lamar Lathon	LB	6-3/252	6	Houston
29	Steve Lorton	CB	5-9/185	4	Texas A&M
87	Vince Marrow	TE	6-3/251	2	Toledo
39	Brett Maxie	S	6-2/194	11	Texas Southern
25	Bubba McDowell	SS	6-1/198	7	Miami (Fla.)
22	Tim McKyer	CB	6-0/178	10	Texas-Arlington
88	Pete Metzelaars	TE	6-7/254	14	Wabash
51	Sam Mills	LB	5-9/225	10	Montclair State
81	David Mims	WR	5-8/191	2	Baylor
76	Darryl Moore	G	6-3/293	4	UTEP
31	Brian O'Neal	RB	6-0/233	2	Penn State
17	Doug Pederson	QB	6-3/212	3	NE Louisiana
55	Andre Powell	LB	6-1/235	3	Penn State
92	Shawn Price	DE	6-5/260	3	Pacific
14	Frank Reich	QB	6-4/210	11	Maryland
63	Mark Rodenhauser	C	6-3/280	8	Illinois
90	Tyrone Rodgers	DT	6-3/276	4	Washington
72	Baron Rollins	G	6-4/335	2	Louisiana Tech
15	Larry Ryans	WR	5-11/182	2	Clemson
58	William Sims	LB	6-3/265	2	SW Louisiana
21	Rod Smith	CB	5-11/287	4	Notre Dame
28	Tony Smith	RB	6-1/212	3	South. Mississippi
50	Frank Stams	LB	6-2/240	7	Notre Dame
27	Charles Swann	WR	6-1/188	2	Indiana State
91	Mike Teeter	DT	6-3/272	4	Michigan
78	Mark Thomas	DE	6-5/273	4	N.C. State
85	Lawyer Tillman	TE	6-5/254	6	Auburn
10	Jack Trudeau	QB	6-3/227	10	Illinois
30	Vernon Turner	RB	5-8/185	5	Carson-Newman
64	Curtis Whitley	C	6-1/288	3	Clemson
98	Gerald Williams	DE	6-3/293	10	Auburn
20	James Williams	CB	5-10/190	6	Fresno State

1995 DRAFT CHOICES

RD.	NAME	POS.	HT./WT.	SCHOOL
1a	Kerry Collins	QB	6-5/240	Penn State
1b	Tyrone Poole	CB	5-8/185	Fort Valley State
1c	Blake Brockermeyer	T	6-4/305	Texas
2	Shawn King	DE	6-3/280	NE Louisiana
4	Frank Garcia	C	6-1/290	Washington
5a	Mike Senters	CB	5-11/173	Northwestern
5b	Andrew Peterson	T	6-5/310	Washington
6a	Steve Strahan	NT	6-1/298	Baylor
6b	Jerry Colquitt	QB	6-4/208	Tennessee
7a	Chad Cota	S	6-1/188	Oregon
7b	Michael Reed	CB	5-9/177	Boston College

Mike Fox, but the Panthers think he's the ideal space-eater at left end. Ex-Chief Greg Kragen or former Steeler Gerald Williams will be the nose guard, but both are well past the peaks of their careers. Rookie right end Shawn King is raw but could be a fierce rusher.

RATING: 5

LINEBACKERS

The Panthers' four starters in the 3-4 defense are far better than you'd expect of an expansion team. Carolina spent millions on their outside linebackers, ex-Oiler Lamar Lathon and former Saint Darion Conner; both have the speed and natural blitzing skills. Three players will share the two inside linebacker positions — Sam Mills, Carlton Bailey and Frank Stams.

RATING: 7

SECONDARY

The Panthers may have trouble covering at the corners and they're fragile at safety, but at least their cornerbacks are fast. First-round pick Tyrone Poole, ex-Cardinal James Williams and former Patriot Rod Smith all run the 40-yard dash in 4.4 seconds or better. The fourth cornerback is Tim McKyer, who has played for a play-off team in eight of his nine NFL seasons won't continue. The Panthers signed strong safety Bubba McDowell, but he's trying to recover

from serious knee injuries. Aging veteran Brett Maxie or seventh-round pick Chad Cota figures to be the free safety.

RATING: 5

SPECIAL TEAMS

This is definitely the strongest part of the team. Placekicker John Kasay is one of the most consistent kickers in the league and, thanks to the Panthers, one of the highest paid. Only 25, he's made 82 of 105 field-goal attempts (78 percent) and 95 of 97 PATs in his four-year career. Punter Tommy Barnhardt averaged 43 yards per punt in 6½ seasons with the Saints. Carolina has several good return men. Baldwin led the AFC in kickoff returns last year in Cleveland (26.9) and Tony Smith ranked third in the NFL (24.9) in 1993. Vernon Turner averaged 10.4 yards on punt returns last year for Tampa Bay. Poole also has the potential to be dangerous.

RATING: 8

DRAFT

The Panthers had lots of picks and used them wisely, although their first move on draft day will be scrutinized for years. Carolina had the No. 1 pick but traded down with Cincinnati, acquiring the Bengals' No. 5 and No. 36 selections. The Panthers got the player they wanted anyway, Penn State's Collins, and got lucky

when Northeast Louisiana defensive end King was available at the 36th spot. They traded up two other times and wound up with three first-round picks. They chose Fort Valley State cornerback Poole with the 22nd overall selection and Texas offensive tackle Brockermeyer with the 29th. Carolina projects all of them as either immediate or eventual starters. The Panthers made mostly obscure picks in the later rounds, but Polian believes at least two starters will come from their seven selections in rounds 4-7.

RATING: 9

COACHING

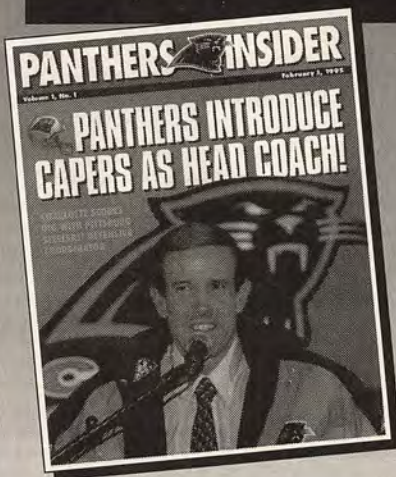
As the Steelers' defensive coordinator, Capers built the league's most aggressive defense, blitzing from virtually every position on the field. The 234 points Pittsburgh allowed last season ranked second in the league behind the Browns. Capers is a tireless worker, consistently working 100-hour weeks, and is highly organized. His staff of assistants includes only two coaches without NFL experience. Jim McNally is regarded as one of the top offensive line coaches in the league. Offensive coordinator Joe Pendry called the offenses previously in Cleveland and Kansas City. Wide receivers coach Richard Williamson once was head coach at Tampa Bay.

RATING: 6

Charles Chandler covers the Panthers for the Charlotte Observer.

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BROWNS

(continued from page 72)

should be much improved in every phase.

Former 49ers No. 1 pick Dana Hall was signed in April and will play as the extra defensive back.

RATING: 9

SPECIAL TEAMS

The Browns ranked first in the league in six categories: field-goal percentage, two-point conversions, average starting point after kick-offs, PAT percentage, points scored and points allowed. They scored four touchdowns — three on kick returns and one on a blocked punt. But blistering returners Metcalf (two TDs) and Randy Baldwin (one TD), who finished first in the AFC with a 26.9-yard kickoff return average, must be replaced. Draftee Michael Miller and receiver Alexander are penciled in as the returners.

Matt Stover made his last 20 field goals and finished as the most accurate kicker in the NFL, making 26 of 28 attempts (92.8 percent). Punter Tom Tupa converted three two-point conversions, earning the nickname "Two-Pa."

RATING: 9

DRAFT

The Browns took heat for trading up to No. 10 and then back down to No. 30 for the 49ers' third- and fourth-round picks in the '95 draft and their first-rounder next year. Top pick Powell, who runs a 4.55, will help on special teams and will see spot play as a pass-rusher. Zeier is short (6-foot) but has a rifle arm and will be groomed as Testaverde's backup. Frederick lends depth at defensive end and fifth-rounder Miller (only 5-6½) could be a surprise as a returner. The sleeper is defensive tackle Tau Papua from Weber State.

The draft is disappointing for '95 but might reap benefits down the road.

RATING: 5

COACHING

The loss of defensive coordinator Nick Saban to Michigan State must be overcome. He coached the NFL's stingiest defense, and Belichick has relied on him since Day One. Rick Venturi is the new coordinator, but Belichick will be more involved.

Steve Crosby was in his first year as offensive coordinator last year and the offense sputtered, but it was also plagued by injuries. He must prove himself this year, and his reputation is riding on his high opinion of Testaverde.

To reach the Super Bowl, Belichick must find a way to beat the Steelers. Last year, the Browns were 0-3 against Pittsburgh.

RATING: 7

Mary Kay Cabot covers the Browns for the Cleveland Plain Dealer.

PACKERS

(continued from page 121)

agency was Pro Bowler Bryce Paup to Buffalo. But George Koonce is an up-and-comer after leading the team in tackles last season (104). This will be the last chance for their No. 1 pick from '93, Wayne Simmons, to prove he's worth his big salary. He replaces Paup at outside linebacker.

RATING: 7

SECONDARY

Newsome should be a big step up from Buckley, a bust after being the fifth player taken overall in the '92 Draft. Doug Evans, a third-year pro, is a burgeoning talent at the other cornerback. Both starting safeties, LeRoy Butler and George Teague, are expected to bounce back from subpar years caused by health problems. Teague was diagnosed after the '93 season with a thyroid condition. Butler suffered from a terrible case of pneumonia early last year that sapped his strength.

RATING: 8

SPECIAL TEAMS

Kicker Chris Jacke had a bad year by his standards (19 of 26 on field goals), but there's nothing to indicate the 29-year-old won't return to form this year. Second-year pro Craig Hentrich's solid year as punter last season (41.4-yard average) makes him a fixture for the future. Brooks, who returned a punt and kickoff for touchdowns last season, will be one of the premier return men if they continue to use him in that role.

RATING: 8

DRAFT

Besides getting two likely starters in Newsome and Henderson, they landed Darius Holland, who has the potential to dominate in the future. If Brian Williams, who has excellent speed and can play both inside and outside linebacker, and either of the receivers chosen — Antonio Freeman in the third round and Charlie Simmons in the sixth — makes the roster, that would be a bonus.

RATING: 7

COACHING

Holmgren will benefit from moving Bennett to halfback, which will force opponents to honor the running game more than they have his first three years. When things have gone badly during his tenure — such as when Green Bay was 3-4 after seven games last season — he has held the team together for late-season runs. The next challenge is to play better out of the gate.

RATING: 8

Pete Dougherty covers the Packers for the Green Bay Press-Gazette.

49ERS

(continued from page 137)

Anthony Peterson and Kevin Mitchell to contribute more.

RATING: 8

SECONDARY

A year ago, the quartet of strong safety Tim McDonald, free safety Merton Hanks and cornerbacks Eric Davis and Sanders banded together to form the 49ers' best backfield since the 1984 crew that sent four players to the Pro Bowl (Eric Wright, Carlton Williamson, Ronnie Lott and Dwight Hicks).

But now two questions arise: McDonald and his \$2.9-million salary and Sanders' future. The 49ers may ask McDonald to take a pay cut, and the proud McDonald may not be willing after he kindly restructured his contract a year ago to accommodate the signing of Sanders. The 49ers signed free-agent safety Marquez Pope from the Rams eventually replace McDonald.

RATING: 9

SPECIAL TEAMS

Rookie kicker Doug Brien made 15 of 20 field-goal attempts, including five of eight from 40-49 yards, and figures to be even more comfortable this year. Punter Klaus Wilmsmeyer left for New Orleans and domed safety, so the 49ers' picked up free agent Tommy Thompson, a legend at the University of Oregon where fans used to chant his name.

Kick returner Dexter Carter signed with the New York Jets, so kicks may fall back to Loville and possibly, a guy named Deion. Sanders has made it clear that, if he is to return to San Francisco, more offensive plays and kick returns will be part of the deal.

RATING: 8

DRAFT

The rest of the NFL could only sit and watch as the 49ers turned an unenviable No. 30 pick in the first round into a major trade ending in the acquisition of Stokes. The 49ers had wanted Stokes for nearly a year and would do anything to make sure the tradition of outstanding receivers will march on.

They were also quietly thrilled by the drafting of guard Tim Hanshaw of BYU in the fourth round, a player they had rated as the No. 2 offensive lineman overall behind Tony Boselli.

RATING: 9

COACHING

Quietly, Seifert is just one Super Bowl win away from tying Hall of Famer Bill Walsh's three titles. He very well may even score this year. Credit Seifert with sublimating his rigid on-field personality to allow characters such as Sanders and Floyd to flourish.

RATING: 9

Bryan Murphy covers the 49ers for the Santa Rosa (Calif.) Press-Democrat.

READER SURVEY

Thanks for buying this issue of JOE THEISMANN'S PRO FOOTBALL YEARBOOK. We'd like to know how you liked it and learn a little about you. Please take a few minutes to fill out the survey below and return it to us at: CS Communications, Route 22 East, One Salem Square, Suite 201 East, Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889. To thank you, the first 50 respondents will receive a free copy of COLLEGE SPORTS.

READERSHIP

1. How much time have you spent reading or looking through your copy of JOE THEISMANN'S PRO FOOTBALL YEARBOOK?

- ☐ Less than 1 hour ☐ 1-3 hours ☐ 3+ hours

2. Approximately, how many people, other than yourself, have read or looked through your copy of JOE THEISMANN'S PRO FOOTBALL YEARBOOK?

Male _____ Female _____

3. Which of the following other preseason sports annuals do you read regularly (3 out of 4 years)? Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Street & Smith ☐ The Sporting News ☐ Lindy's
☐ Athlon ☐ Peterson's ☐ None of these

4. Which of the following sports magazines do you read regularly (that is, 3 out of 4 issues)? Please check all that apply.

- ☐ College Sports ☐ The Sporting News ☐ Sport
☐ Inside Sports ☐ Sports Illustrated ☐ None of these

5. Which of the following non-sports magazines do you read regularly (that is, 3 out of 4 issues)? Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Business Week ☐ Money ☐ Road & Track
☐ Car & Driver ☐ Motor Trend ☐ Rolling Stone
☐ Consumer Reports ☐ Newsweek ☐ Time
☐ Family Life ☐ New Yorker ☐ US News
☐ Men's Health ☐ People ☐ Playboy
☐ Men's Journal

Other: _____ (please specify)

ACTIVITIES

1a. Which of the following sports do you participate in regularly? (Please check all that apply.)

- ☐ Baseball ☐ Hockey ☐ Basketball
☐ Running/Jogging ☐ Boating/Sailing ☐ Soccer
☐ Cycling ☐ Softball ☐ Mountain biking
☐ Swimming ☐ Football ☐ Tennis
☐ Golf ☐ Walking ☐ Hiking

Other: _____ (please specify)

2a. Which of the following college and professional games or events do you attend? (Please check all that apply.)

	COLLEGE	PRO	NO. ATTENDED		COLLEGE	PRO	NO. ATTENDED
Baseball	☐	☐	_____	Track & Field	☐	☐	_____
Basketball	☐	☐	_____	Soccer	☐	☐	_____
Football	☐	☐	_____	Softball	☐	☐	_____
Golf	☐	☐	_____	Swimming	☐	☐	_____
Hockey	☐	☐	_____	Tennis	☐	☐	_____
Other:			_____ (please specify)				

3. During the past 12 months, how many domestic round trip airline flights did you or other members of your household take? (If none, please write in "0")

for business _____ trips
for pleasure _____ trips
Total _____ trips

4a. Do you collect sports trading cards? ☐ Yes ☐ No

4b. "If yes", which sports do you collect?

- ☐ Baseball ☐ Basketball ☐ Football ☐ Hockey

Other: _____ (please specify)

YOUR HOME

1. Which of the following best describes the main residence of your household? (Please check all that apply.)

- OWNED BY SELF OR OTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBER: ☐ House ☐ RENTED: ☐ House
☐ Condominium ☐ Apartment
☐ Cooperative Apartment ☐ Other: _____ (please specify)
☐ Other: _____ (please specify)

2. If you or other household members own your main residence, what is its approximate present market value, including land?

- ☐ Under \$75,000 ☐ \$200,000-\$249,999 ☐ \$750,000 or more
☐ \$75,000-\$99,999 ☐ \$250,000-\$299,999 If \$750,000 or more,

- ☐ \$100,000-\$124,999 ☐ \$300,000-\$399,999 approximate value:
☐ \$125,000-\$149,000 ☐ \$400,000-\$499,000 \$ _____
☐ \$150,000-\$199,000 ☐ \$500,000-\$749,999

BEVERAGES

1. In column A, please indicate which of the following beverages, if any, you personally drink. In column B, for those beverages you drink, please indicate how many times you drink it in an average month. In column C, for each type of beverage you personally drink, please indicate whether you normally order that beverage by brand when drinking it outside the home. (Check all that apply in each column.)

	A	B	C		A	B	C
	DRINK	NO. TIMES	ORDER BY BRAND		DRINK	NO. TIMES	ORDER BY BRAND
Soft Drinks	☐	_____	☐	Rum	☐	_____	☐
Sports Drinks	☐	_____	☐	Tequila	☐	_____	☐
Bottled Water	☐	_____	☐	Brandy/Cognac	☐	_____	☐
Bourbon	☐	_____	☐	Cordials/Liqueurs	☐	_____	☐
Rye Whiskey	☐	_____	☐	Imported Wine	☐	_____	☐
Canadian Whiskey	☐	_____	☐	Domestic Wine	☐	_____	☐
Irish Whiskey	☐	_____	☐	Imported Beer	☐	_____	☐
Scotch	☐	_____	☐	Domestic Beer	☐	_____	☐
Vodka	☐	_____	☐	Non-Alcohol or Low Alcohol Beer	☐	_____	☐
Gin	☐	_____	☐				
Other	☐	_____	☐				

ABOUT YOU

1. Are you male or female? ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. Please indicate your age.

- ☐ Under 18 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 45-54
☐ 18-24 ☐ 35-44 ☐ 55 or over

3. What is your marital status?

- ☐ Married ☐ Widowed
☐ Single (never married) ☐ Separated or divorced

4. How many members are there in your household within each of the following age groups including yourself? (If none, please write "0.")

NUMBER OF ADULTS (18 years or over) _____
NUMBER OF CHILDREN:
12-17 years old _____
6-11 years old _____
Under 6 years old _____
Total household members: _____

5. What is the highest level of education you have completed to date? (Please check only one.)

- ☐ Some high school or less ☐ Attended 4-yr. college w/o degree
☐ High school graduate ☐ Graduated from 4-yr. college
☐ Attended 2 yr. college w/o degree ☐ Post-graduate study without degree
☐ Graduated from 2-yr. college ☐ Post-graduate study with degree

6. What is your current employment status? (Please check only one.)

- ☐ Self-employed ☐ Employed part-time ☐ Other
☐ Employed full-time ☐ Student

7. If you are currently employed, what is your title or position? (Please be specific, e.g., partner, vice president, office manager, sales manager, salesman, teacher, doctor, lawyer, etc.)

8. Please check the box that describes your total individual employment income in 1994, before taxes. (Please include all income related to your employment such as salary, bonuses, share of profits, etc., but do not include other income such as investment income, interest, rentals, etc. or income from other family members.)

- ☐ None ☐ \$35,000-\$49,999 ☐ \$100,000-\$199,999
☐ Under \$25,000. ☐ \$50,000-\$74,999 ☐ \$200,000 or more
☐ \$25,000-\$34,999 ☐ \$75,000-\$99,999

9. Please indicate your 1994 total household income before taxes. Please include all income for all family members and include all sources (salary bonuses, investment income, rents, royalties, etc.)

- ☐ Under \$30,000 ☐ \$60,000-\$69,999 ☐ \$150,000-\$249,999
☐ \$30,000-\$39,999 ☐ \$70,000-\$79,999 ☐ \$250,000-\$499,999
☐ \$40,000-\$49,999 ☐ \$80,000-\$99,999 ☐ \$500,000-\$999,999
☐ \$50,000-\$59,999 ☐ \$100,000-\$149,999 ☐ \$1,000,000 or more

FANTASY FOOTBALL GUIDE

By **BILL HOWARD**
and **NORB GARRETT**

It would be hard to find a die-hard sports fan who's not involved in a fantasy league of some sort. It's just too hard to turn down the chance to be the owner, general manager and manager of your own dream team of superstars.

But as simple as the concept of fantasy leagues is, it doesn't take long before owners try to make it more realistic, which means paying for free agents and statistical services with spreadsheets that make the stock market easier to read.

Hence, we've come up with our own pro football fantasy league that's simple enough that anyone can keep track of their players and, more importantly, keeps the fun from drowning in a pool of nit-picking statistics. It's not a perfect league, and you can tinker with the rules as you like, but it's just right for anyone who wants to get involved without sacrificing one's social life.

1. DRAFT DAY

For the most efficient draft, make sure you've got the order of rounds picked out in advance and written on paper. Despite the league's simple nature, ill-prepared owners can make any draft a nauseating experience. Allow each owner 30 seconds for picks in the first three rounds and one minute each subsequent round. If an owner doesn't pick in that time, his or her pick gets sent to the end of the round. It may not make you the most popular commissioner, but it gets everyone out of the draft at a reasonable time.

We suggest 12 rounds and the breakdown of the roster as follows: two quarterbacks; four running backs; four wideouts; two tight ends; two kickers and two team defenses. For a starting lineup, just divide each position in half (one QB, two RBs, etc.). Player protection at the end of the year is optional but should be decided before the draft due to an owner's draft strategy.

2. SCHEDULING

With a 10-team league, we advise a 13-week schedule, which begins Week One of the NFL schedule (please see Schedule graphic).

With this format, each team plays within its division twice and outside once. Playoffs have the top two teams in each division facing each other and the semifinal winners facing in the championship. The league ends before Week 16 of the NFL season so the championship doesn't fall in a week that often has top teams resting its stars for the playoffs.

All ties in the standings will be broken first by head-to-head competition and then total points in those two contests. Any further tiebreakers are at the commissioner's discretion.

3. TRANSACTIONS

One of the stickiest jobs in any fantasy league is keeping track of rosters due to transac-

tions. Here are some easy-to-follow guidelines: **TRADES:** The commissioner must monitor all trades for fairness, and rosters must fit the above requirements after the deal.

FREE AGENTS: Make a deadline day for free-agent acquisitions so teams can adjust their lineups for the following week (Wednesdays are advised because of Thursday-night games). Any free-agent acquisition after Thursday is in effect for the following week. Should two owners put in for the same free agent, the priority breakdown is as follows:

1. Injured-reserve moves.
2. The team with the worst record.
3. Whichever team put in for the player first.

INJURED RESERVE: Same deadline and tiebreaker order as Free Agents. When the original player is off the injured list, the owner must choose between the previously-injured player or his replacement. The player let go immediately becomes an eligible free agent at the beginning of the following week.

4. SCORING

Trying to find a system that keeps everyone happy while keeping the scorekeeper/commissioner sane is hard to find unless some concessions are made. Rather than using individual defensive player stats, we've combined them into one team defense. We've also included kick returns with team defenses to make it easy, but feel free to create a new scoring category for return specialists. Of course, you can add categories as you like, but, with sanity in mind, the scoring system is as follows:

OFFENSIVE: 1 point for every 10 rushing or receiving yards; 6 points for a rushing or receiving TD; 1 point for every 20 yards passing; 3 points for throwing a touchdown; 2 points for running or receiving a two-point conversion; 1 point for throwing a two-point conversion; 1 point for a PAT; 3 points for any field goal 49 yards and under; 2 bonus points for a field goal 50 yards and over.

DEFENSIVE: 6 points for touchdowns on any return (interception, fumble recovery, punt or kickoff); 2 points for a safety or forced turnover; 1 point for a sack.

Yards allowed - 199 yards or less: 15 points; 200-225: 13 points; 226-250: 11 points; 251-275: 9 points; 276-300: 7 points; 301-325: 5 points; 326-350: 3 points; 351-375: 2 points; 375-400: 1 point; over 400: 0 points.

Points allowed - Shutout: 25 points; 2: 22 points; 3: 20 points; 4-9: 17 points; 10-15: 13 points; 16-20: 11 points; 21-25: 9 points; 26-30: 7 points; 31-35: 5 points; 36-40: 3 points; 40-41: 1 point; 42 and over: no points.

With the above scoring system in mind, we've ranked each position so you can get started on your own league. Some rookies may not be on our list, but that's where you matter the most. Snagging young, unknown studs is often the key to winning it all. Enjoy.



Steve Young is a lock for the top pick this year.

FANTASY FOOTBALL SCHEDULE

Team	DIVISION A					DIVISION B				
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Week #										
1	2	1	4	3	6	5	8	7	10	9
2	3	5	1	7	2	10	4	9	8	6
3	4	8	5	1	3	9	10	2	6	7
4	5	4	9	2	1	7	6	10	3	8
5	10	3	2	5	4	8	9	6	7	1
6	2	1	5	6	3	4	10	9	8	7
7	3	5	1	9	2	7	6	10	4	8
8	5	7	4	3	1	8	2	6	10	9
9	4	3	2	1	10	9	8	7	6	5
10	8	9	7	5	4	10	3	1	2	6
11	6	4	10	2	8	1	9	5	7	3
12	9	10	6	8	7	3	5	4	1	2
13	7	6	8	10	9	2	1	3	5	4
14	Division Playoffs									
15	Championship									

THE TOP 50

Rk./Player, Team	Pos.	Total Pts.	Avg. PPG
1. Young, SF	QB	364.45	22.78
2. Smith, Dall	RB	314	19.62
3. Favre, GB	QB	311	19.44
4. Marino, Mia	QB	295.65	18.48
5. Bledsoe, NE	QB	277.75	17.36
6. Sanders, Det	RB	264	16.50
7. Elway, Den	QB	259.50	16.22
8t. Faulk, Ind	RB	252	15.75
8t. Warren, Sea	RB	252	15.75
10. Moon, Minn	QB	250.95	15.68
11. Rice, SF	WR	248	15.50
12. Everett, NO	QB	242.50	15.16
13. George, Atl	QB	241	15.06
14. Hostetler, LA	QB	237.70	14.86
15. Means, SD	RB	230	14.37
16. Cunningham, Phi	QB	224.45	14.03
17. Watters, Phi	RB	224	14.00
18. Sharpe*	WR	220	13.75
19. Kelly, Buff	QB	214.55	13.41
20. Humphries, SD	QB	200.40	12.52
21. Mathis, Atl	WR	200	12.50
22. Thomas, Buff	RB	197	12.31
23. Erickson, Ind	QB	193.35	12.08
24. Hoard, Cle	RB	187	11.69
25. Reed, Buff	WR	186	11.62
26. Brown, LA	WR	184	11.50
27. H. Moore, Det	WR	183	11.44
28. Esiason, NYJ	QB	179.10	11.19
29. H. Williams, LA	RB	179	11.18
30. Pickens, Cin	WR	178	11.12
31. Brown, NYG	QB	177.80	11.11
32. Ellard, Wash	WR	175	10.94
33. Testaverde, Cle	QB	172.60	10.79
34. Bennett, GB	RB	170	10.62
35. Aikman, Dall	QB	169.90	10.62
36. Fryar, Mia	WR	169	10.56
37. C. Carter, Minn	WR	167	10.44
38. Blake, Cin	QB	166.70	10.42
39. O'Donnell, Pitt	QB	166.15	10.38
40. Allen*	RB	165	10.31
41. Irvin, Dall	WR	160	10.00
42. Coates, NE	TE	159	9.94
43. Heyward, Atl	RB	158	9.87
44. Rison, Cle	WR	156	9.75
45. Bettis, St.L	RB	155	9.69
46. Rhett, TB	RB	154	9.63
47t. Hampton, NYG	RB	153	9.56
47t. J. Johnson, NYJ	RB	153	9.56
49. Parmalee, Mia	RB	152	9.50
50. Walker, NYG	RB	150	9.38

* - Free Agent

NOTE: Defenses ranked seperately.

QUARTERBACKS

Name, Team	Rush Yds	TDs	Pass Yds	TDs	Ints	TP
1. Young, SF	293	7	3969	35	10	364.45
2. Favre, GB	202	2	3882	33	14	311.10
3. Marino, Mia	4	0	4453	30	17	295.65
4. Bledsoe, NE	40	0	4555	25	27	277.75
5. Elway, Den	235	4	3490	16	10	259.50
6. Moon, Minn	55	0	4264	18	19	250.95
7. Everett, NO	35	0	3855	22	18	242.50
8. George, Atl	66	0	3734	23	18	241.00
9. Hostetler, LA	159	2	3334	20	16	237.70
10. Cunningham, Phi	288	3	3229	16	13	224.45
11. Kelly, Buff	77	1	3114	22	17	214.55
12. Humphries, SD	19	0	3209	17	12	200.40
13. Erickson, Ind	68	1	2919	16	10	193.35
14. Esiason, NYJ	28	0	2782	17	13	179.10
15. Brown, NYG	196	2	2536	12	16	177.80
16. Testaverde, Cle	37	2	2575	16	18	172.60
17. Aikman, Dall	62	1	2676	13	12	169.90
18. Blake, Cin	204	1	2154	14	9	166.70
19. O'Donnell, Pitt	80	1	2443	13	9	166.15
20. Miller, St. L	100	0	2104	16	14	149.20
21. Mirer, Sea	153	0	2151	11	7	148.55
22. Walsh, Chi	4	1	2078	10	8	131.90
23. Kreig, Ariz	35	0	1629	14	3	122.20
24. Shuler, Wash	103	0	1658	10	12	106.05
25. Harbaugh, Ind	223	0	1440	9	6	104.15
26. Richardson, Hou	217	1	1202	6	6	99.10
27. Mitchell, Det	24	1	1456	10	11	99.00
28. Chandler, Hou	61	1	1352	7	2	95.65
29. Beuerlein, Jack	39	1	1545	5	9	91.20
30. Tolliver, Hou	37	2	1287	6	7	89.20
31. Friesz, Sea	1	0	1266	10	9	84.30
32. Schroeder, Ariz	59	0	1510	4	7	83.45
33. Klingler, Cin	85	0	1327	6	9	83.35
34. Majkowski, Det	34	3	1010	6	7	81.20
35. Kramer, Chi	-2	0	1129	8	8	72.45
36. Tomczak, Pitt	22	0	804	4	0	54.20
37. Millen, Den	57	0	893	2	3	50.50
38. Bono, KC	-1	0	796	4	4	47.80
39. Rypien, St. L	4	0	694	4	3	43.70
40. Carlson, Hou	17	0	727	1	4	36.35

LIKELY TO GET SOME PT

Reich, Car
Trudeau, Car
Pederson, Car
Dilfer, TB

PT UNLIKELY

Frerrotte, Wash
Peete, Phi
Wilson, NO
Musgrave, Den
Graham, NYG

Evans, LA
Gilbert, SD
McMahon, Ariz
Brister, NYJ
Hebert, Atl
Grbac, SF
Johnson, Minn
Salisbury, Minn
Garrett, Dall
McGwire, Mia
Strom, Buff

TIGHT ENDS

Name, Team	Rec Yds	TDs	TP
1. Coates, NE	1174	7	159
2. Sh. Sharpe, Den	1010	4	125
3. Jones, SF	670	9	121
4. Jackson, GB	673	7	109
5. Mitchell, NYJ	749	4	98
6. Green, Mia	618	4	85
7. Metzelaars, Car	428	5	72
8. Drayton, St. L	276	6	63
9. Cross, NYG	364	4	60
10. Novacek, Dall	475	2	59

TIGHT ENDS CONTINUED

Name, Team	Rec Yds	TDs	TP
11. To. McGee, Cin	492	1	55
12. T. Kinchen, St. L	352	3	53
13t. Harris, TB	337	3	51
13t. Smith, NO	330	3	51
15. Walker, KC	382	2	50
16t. Glover, LA	371	2	49
16t. West, Ind	377	2	49
18. Pierce, NYG	214	4	45
19. Bavaro, Phi	215	3	39
20. Cooper, Minn	363	0	36
21t. Gedney, Chi	157	3	33
21t. Horton, Wash	157	3	33
21t. A. Jordan, Minn	336	0	33
21t. Pupunu, SD	214	2	33
25t. Armstrong, TB	265	1	32
25t. M. Johnson, Phi	204	2	32
27. Kei. Cash, KC	192	2	31
28. P. Kinchen, Cle	232	1	29
29. Cook, Chi	212	1	27
30. Ker. Cash, LA	190	1	25
31. Ware, Ariz	171	1	23
32t. C. Smith, Wash	118	1	17
32t. Thornton, NYJ	171	0	17
34t. Chmura, GB	165	0	16
34t. Holman, Det	163	0	16

LIKELY TO GET SOME PT

Edmunds, Sea
Carter, Hou
Jennings, Chi
Haws, Car
Marrow, Car
D. Brown, Jack

PT UNLIKELY

Hall, Det
F. Baxter, NYJ
R. Williams, Mia
Wainwright, Den
R. Johnson, Phi

RUNNING BACKS

Name, Team	Rush Yds	Rec Yds	TDs	Total Pts
1. Smith, Dall	1484	341	22	314
2. Sanders, Det	1883	283	8	264
3t. Faulk, Ind	1282	522	12	252
3t. Warren, Sea	1545	323	11	252
5. Means, SD	1350	235	12	230
6. Watters, Phi	877	719	11	224
7. Thomas, Buff	1093	349	9	197
8. Hoard, Cle	890	445	9	187
9. H. Williams, LA	983	391	7	179
10. Bennett, GB	623	546	9	170
11. Allen*	1031	148	8	165
12. Heyward, Atl	779	335	8	158
13. Bettis, St. L	1025	293	4	155
14. Rhett, TB	1011	119	7	154
15t. Hampton, NYG	1075	103	6	153
15t. Johnson, NYJ	931	303	5	153
15t. Tillman, Chi	899	222	7	153
18. Parmalee, Mia	868	249	7	152
19. Walker, NYG	528	500	8	150
20. Allen, KC	709	349	7	146
21. Morris, Pitt	836	204	7	145
22. Centers, Ariz	336	647	7	139
23. L. Russell, Den	620	227	9	138
24. Foster, Pitt	851	124	5	127
25. Butts, NE	703	54	8	123
26. L. Thompson, NE	312	465	7	119
27. Ervins, Wash	650	293	4	118
28t. Metcalf, Atl	329	436	7	117
28t. White, Cle	757	188	4	117
30. Brown, NO	489	428	4	114
31t. Moore, NYJ	780	52	5	113
31t. G. Brown, Hou	648	194	5	113
33. Cobb, Jack	579	299	4	110

RUNNING BACKS CONTINUED

Name, Team	Rush Yds	Rec Yds	TDs	Total Pts
34. Bates, NO	579	62	6	99
35. Milburn, Den	201	549	4	98
36. Meggett, NE	298	293	6	94
37. Anders, KC	231	525	3	93
38. Byars, Mia	64	418	7	89
39. J.L. Williams, Pitt	317	378	3	86
40. Fenner, LA	468	276	2	85
41. Harmon, SD	94	615	2	82
42. Floyd, SF	305	145	6	80
43. K. Turner, Phi	111	471	3	76
44. Harris, Chi	464	236	1	75
45. Broussard*	403	218	2	73
46t. Hill, KC	574	92	1	72
46t. Joseph, Cin	203	344	3	72
46t. Mitchell, Wash	311	236	3	72
49. Potts, Ind	336	251	2	70
50. Johnston, Dall	138	325	4	69
51. Garner, Phi	399	74	3	64
52. Green, Cin	223	267	2	60
53t. K. Davis, Buff	381	82	2	58
53t. Lee, Minn	104	368	2	58
55. Hebron, Phi	325	137	2	57
56. J. Bailey, St. L	35	516	0	54
57. Anderson, NYJ	207	212	2	53
58t. Kirby, Mia	233	154	2	50
58t. Pegram, Pitt	358	99	1	50
60. Brooks, Wash	297	68	2	47
61. B. Baxter, NYJ	170	40	4	45
62. Gardner, Buff	135	89	4	45
63. Spikes, Mia	312	16	2	44
64. Byner, Cle	219	102	2	43
65. S. Smith, Sea	80	142	3	40

*- Free agent

LIKELY TO GET SOME PT

Lassic, Car
D. Carter, NYJ
D. Moore, SF
Rathman, LA
L. Johnson, GB
Workman, TB
Rasheed, NYG
Bienemy, Cin
Higgs, Ariz
Hearst, Ariz
Clark, Den
Loville, SF
Ball, Car

Royster, Jack

PT UNLIKELY

Logan, SF
Hoge, Chi
B. Thomas, Dall
Rivers, Den
Vardell, Cle
Saxon, Mia
Strong, Sea
McDowell, TB
M. Wilson, Jack
Worley*
Craver, Den

WIDE RECEIVERS

Name, Team	Rec Yds	Rush Yds	TDs	TP
1. Rice, SF	1499	93	15	248
2. Sharpe*	1119	15	18	220
3. Mathis, Atl	1342	0	11	200
4. Reed, Buff	1303	87	8	186
5. Brown, LA	1309	0	9	184
6. H. Moore, Det	1173	0	11	183
7. Pickens, Cin	1127	0	11	178
8. Ellard, Wash	1397	-5	6	175
9. Fryar, Mia	1270	0	7	169
10. C. Carter, Minn	1256	0	7	167
11. Irvin, Dall	1241	0	6	160
12. Rison, Atl	1088	0	8	156
13. Barnett, Phi	1127	0	5	142
14. J. Reed, Minn	1175	0	4	141
15. A. Miller, Den	1107	3	5	140
16. R. Moore, Ariz	1010	-3	6	137
17. Blades, Sea	1086	32	4	135
18. Haynes, NO	985	43	5	132
19t. Harper, TB	821	0	8	130



2nd YEAR

PROCHALLENGE FANTASY FOOTBALL

REGULAR SEASON & PLAYOFF CONTESTS

Over
\$50,000
in prizes

Entry Deadline:
Sept 2nd, 1995

YOU BE THE COACH! DRAFT YOUR OWN TEAM!

PLAY THE REGULAR SEASON FOR ONLY \$24.95. GET THE PLAYOFFS FOR FREE WITH TWO OR MORE ENTRIES!

A OVER \$50,000 IN PRIZES UP FOR GRABS!

Regular Season - 1st Place Grand Prize . \$12,500

2 nd - \$5,000	5 th - \$500	Weekly Prizes -
3 rd - \$2,000	6 th to 10 th - \$100	total \$6,400
4 th - \$1,000	11 th to 25 th - \$50	1 st - \$250 starts Sept. 20
26 th to 1000 - Playoff Vouchers \$10	2 nd - \$100, 3 rd - \$50	

Playoffs Grand Prize \$3,000 League Grand Prize \$1,000

2 nd - \$1,500	3 rd - \$500	2 nd - \$300	3 rd - \$200
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Bonus Prize \$5,000 It's yours if you pick on your original entry the top player in each of the 12 groups at the end of the season.

B EASY TO ENTER!

QUESTIONS? 1-800-JBE-7778 (9:30-6:00 EST)

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SCORING

All players will
accumulate points
based on the
following:

OFFENSE	DEFENSE
10 yds rushing 1pt	Full sack 10pts
10 yds passing 1pt	½ sack 5pts
10 yds receiving 1pt	Interception 10pts
TD's 5pts	Int./TD 10pts
Converts 1pt	Fumbles/TD 10pts
2 pt. Conversion ... 2pts	
Field goals 3pts	

C EASY TO PLAY! (\$1,000 IN EARLY ENTRY PRIZES)

■ **Entry deadline is Sept. 2.** (fax, courier or postmarked)

If you enter by August 5th, you qualify for \$1,000 in Early Entry Prizes!

■ **Select Your Dream Team**

Choose one player from each of the 12 boxes. All players accumulate points for each and every game played.

■ **Receive Your Monthly Football Package**

FIRST UPDATE BY SEPT. 20. Each month you will receive a package including your player selections, total points, contest ranking, injury reports, Playoff info and trade updates. **IMPORTANT:** Your first package will also include trading hotline access #, trading details and complete contest rules.

■ **Hotline: Trade Your Players/Weekly Updates**

(NOT A 1-900 LINE.) Trading Players/Updates starts Wednesday Sept. 20. You can make 6 trades replacing up to 3 players each trade in the Regular Season (1 in the Playoffs). A traded player must be replaced by another player from the same group (01-12).

■ **Be Your Own League Manager**

(\$1,500 IN CASH PRIZES.) If you want to form your own league, submit a minimum of 5 entries in one envelope. Write the name of the League Manager as indicated on the entry form. Mark each envelope ATTN: LEAGUE MANAGER. Remember, all league members qualify for all other contest prizes and get the free Playoff Offer.

SELECT ONE (1) PLAYER FROM EACH OF THE 12 BOXES. LAST YEAR'S POINTS INDICATED/TEAMS MAY CHANGE

01 Quarterbacks	02 Quarterbacks	03 Quarterbacks	04 Runningbacks	05 Runningbacks	06 Receivers
☐ 1 D. MARINO, MIA 600	☐ 1 S. HUMPHRIES, S.D 406	☐ 1 N. O'DONNELL, PIT 322	☐ 1 C. WARREN, SEA 241	☐ 1 B. PARMALLEE, MIA 145	☐ 1 S. SHARPE, G.B 202
☐ 2 B. FAVRE, G.B 583	☐ 2 C. ERICKSON, T.B 382	☐ 2 J. BLAKE, CIN 310	☐ 2 B. SANDERS, DET 256	☐ 2 R. HAMPTON, NYG 147	☐ 2 J. RICE, S.F 233
☐ 3 S. YOUNG, S.F 635	☐ 3 V. TESTAVERDE, CLE 350	☐ 3 F. REICH, CAR 61	☐ 3 E. SMITH, DAL 292	☐ 3 L. HOARD, CLE 178	☐ 3 A. REED, BUF 181
☐ 4 J. ELWAY, DEN 472	☐ 4 J. KELLY, BUF 433	☐ 4 D. BROWN, NYG 342	☐ 4 B. FOSTER, PIT 122	☐ 4 B. MORRIS, PIT 138	☐ 4 T. BROWN, RAI 175
☐ 5 W. MOON, MIN 521	☐ 5 J. GEORGE, ATL 494	☐ 5 A. WARE, JAC —	☐ 5 N. MEANS, S. D 218	☐ 5 G. BROWN, HOU 108	☐ 5 H. MOORE, DET 172
☐ 6 D. BLEDSOE, N.E 584	☐ 6 T. AIKMAN, DAL 343	☐ 6 R. MIRER, SEA 285	☐ 6 M. FAULK, IND 240	☐ 6 T. ALLEN, MIN 157	☐ 6 A. RISON, CLE 148
☐ 7 J. EVERETT, N.O 498	☐ 7 B. ESIASON, NYJ 368	☐ 7 S. WALSH, CHI 262	☐ 7 R. WATTERS, PHI 213	☐ 7 J. BETTIS, STL 151	☐ 7 M. IRVIN, DAL 155
☐ 8 R. CUNNINGHAM, PHI 446	☐ 8 J. HOSTETLER, RAI 459	☐ 8 C. MILLER, STL 300	☐ 8 T. THOMAS, BUF 188	☐ 8 C. HEYWARD, ATL 150	☐ 8 T. MATHIS, ATL 189
07 Receivers	08 Receivers	09 Receivers	10 Kickers	11 Sacks	12 .. Interceptions
☐ 1 A. MILLER, DEN 135	☐ 1 B. PERRIMAN, DET 104	☐ 1 K. JACKSON, G.B 102	☐ 1 C. BONIOL, DAL 114	☐ 1 B. SMITH, BUF 110	☐ 1 D. SANDERS, S.F 90
☐ 2 I. FRYAR, MIA 162	☐ 2 B. BLADES, SEA 128	☐ 2 E. GREENE, MIA 81	☐ 2 D. BRIEN, S.F 105	☐ 2 J. CROSS, MIA 105	☐ 2 T. MCDANIEL, RAI 100
☐ 3 A. HARPER, T.B 120	☐ 3 M. TIMPSON, N.E 110	☐ 3 B. JONES, S.F 112	☐ 3 G. ANDERSON, PIT 104	☐ 3 K. GREENE, PIT 140	☐ 3 E. TURNER, CLE 110
☐ 4 R. MOORE, NYJ 131	☐ 4 M. SHERRARD, NYG 111	☐ 4 J. MITCHELL, NYJ 94	☐ 4 J. JAEGER, RAI 97	☐ 4 C. HALEY, DAL 135	☐ 4 R. BUCHANAN, IND 120
☐ 5 C. CARTER, MIN 160	☐ 5 C. WILLIAMS, PHI 97	☐ 5 B. COATES, N. E 152	☐ 5 J. CARNEY, S.D 135	☐ 5 L. O'NEAL, S.D 125	☐ 5 M. HANKS, S.F 75
☐ 6 F. BARNETT, PHI 137	☐ 6 W. DAVIS, K.C 107	☐ 6 J. NOVACEK, DAL 67	☐ 6 M. RANDESEN, N.O 116	☐ 6 R. RANDLE, MIN 135	☐ 6 J. HASTY, NYJ 80
☐ 7 C. PICKENS, CIN 167	☐ 7 H. JEFFRIES, HOU 108	☐ 7 SH. SHARPE, DEN 121	☐ 7 F. REVEIZ, MIN 132	☐ 7 W. MARTIN, N.O 100	☐ 7 R. WOODSON, PIT 90
☐ 8 H. ELLARD, WAS 169	☐ 8 T. MARTIN, S.D 123	☐ 8 J. HARRIS, T.B 48	☐ 8 J. ELAM, DEN 119	☐ 8 N. SMITH, K.C 125	☐ 8 M. HURST, N.E 90

FIRST NAME LAST NAME

 ADDRESS APT. #

 CITY STATE

 ZIP CODE AREA CODE HOME PHONE #

 LEAGUE MANAGER NAME (only if applicable)

Please indicate your contest selection

- ☐ \$24.95 - Regular Season
☐ \$29.95 - Reg. Season + Playoffs
☐ **FREE PLAYOFF OFFER:** If you enter more than once, the Playoffs are free! I have included _____ teams for both Regular Season and Playoffs @ \$24.95ea. = \$ _____

Payment (MAKE CHECK/M.O. IN US FUNDS PAYABLE TO JBE LTD.)
☐ Check ☐ Money Order ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard
 Credit Card # _____
 Expiry Date ____/____/____ Signature _____

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To receive a copy of the official rules and a one-time team selection entry form, void of all services, no purchase necessary, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to JBE Ltd / Football, P.O. Box 116, Ellicott Station, Buffalo, N.Y. 14205. Must be received by August 11, 1995. Entries must be of legal age. Not affiliated with the National Football League. Void where prohibited by law.

WIDE RECEIVERS CONTINUED

Name, Team	Rec Yds	Rush Yds	TDs	TP
19t. Martin, SD	885	-9	7	130
21. Scott, Cin	866	106	5	126
22. Anderson, Ind	945	11	5	125
23. Brisby, NE	904	0	5	120
24t. Graham, Chi	944	0	4	118
24t. Sherrard, NYG	825	-10	6	118
26t. Jeffries, Hou	783	0	6	114
26t. Early, NO	894	10	4	114
28. Timpson, Chi	941	14	3	113
29. Perriman, Det	761	86	4	108
30. Dawkins, Ind	742	0	5	104
31t. Howard, Jack	727	4	5	102
31t. C. Wilson, TB	652	15	6	102
33. Small, NO	719	0	5	101
34t. Seay, SD	645	0	6	100
34t. C. Williams, Phi	813	11	3	100
36. Ismail, Minn	696	0	5	99
37. Alexander, Cle	828	38	2	97
38. Slaughter, Hou	846	0	2	96
39t. Turner, Ind	593	-3	6	95
39t. Proehl, Sea	651	0	5	95
41. Brooks, GB	648	0	4	91
42. Emanuel, Atl	649	4	4	88
43. Birden, Atl	637	0	4	87
44. Ingram, GB	506	0	6	86
45. Calloway, NYG	666	77	2	85
46t. Hester, St. L	644	28	3	84
46t. Jefferson, SD	627	40	3	84
48t. Clark, Ariz	771	0	1	83
48t. Taylor, SF	531	-2	5	83
50t. Davis, KC	525	0	5	82
50t. Carrier, Car	452	14	6	82
52. Thigpen, Pitt	546	0	4	78
53. Beebe, Car	527	11	4	77
54. Monk*	581	0	3	76
55. Johnson, Pitt	577	-1	3	75
56. K. Martin, Jack	681	0	1	74
57t. Dawsey, TB	673	0	1	73
57t. Hawkins, TB	438	0	5	73
59t. McDuffie, Mia	488	32	3	69
59t. Conway, Chi	546	31	2	69
61. Dawson, KC	537	24	2	67
62. Sanders, Atl	599	0	1	65
63. Walls, NO	406	0	4	64
64. Morgan, GB	397	0	4	63
65. Bi. Brooks, Buff	482	0	2	60
66. Givens, Hou	521	-5	1	58
67. Crittenden, NE	379	0	3	55
68. Hill, Mia	544	0	0	54
69. Matthews, Det	359	0	3	53
70. C. Tillman, Jack	455	0	1	51

LIKELY TO GET SOME PT

Davenport, Jack
D. Russell, Den
Hastings, Pitt
Jett, LA
Jackson, Cle
Wright, St. L
McCaffrey, Den

K. Williams, Dall
Winans, Wash
Green, Sea
Mills, Pitt
Coleman, Hou
Bailey, Phi
Copeland, TB
Bruce, St. L
Yarborough, NYJ

Lewis, NYG
Copeland, Buff
Waddle, Car
Guilford, Car
Ti. McGee, Cin
Martin, KC
Waddle, Chi
Stone, Pitt
Mickens, GB

10 DREAM TEAM ROOKIES

1. Ki-Jana Carter, RB, Cin
2. J.J. Stokes, WR, SF
3. Michael Westbrook, WR, Wash

4. Napoleon Kaufman, RB, LA
5. Joey Galloway, WR, Sea
6. Rashaan Salaam, RB, Chi
7. Steve McNair, QB, Hou
8. James Stewart, RB, Jack
9. Mark Bruener, TE, Pitt
10. Kyle Brady, TE, NYJ

TEAM DEFENSE

TEAM	Avg. Yds. Allowed		Avg. Pts Allowed		Fumble		TDs	Points
	Allowed	Allowed	Sacks	Int.	Recov.	Safeties		
San Diego	316.0	19.1	43	17	15	0	7	165
Minnesota	296.4	19.6	36	18	16	0	7	164
San Fran.	302.4	18.5	38	23	12	0	6	160
Dallas	269.6	15.5	47	22	9	0	5	159
Pittsburgh	270.4	14.6	55	17	14	0	3	157
Philadelphia	294.4	19.3	42	21	14	1	3	150
Cleveland	301.6	12.8	38	18	13	0	5	148
Kansas City	312.5	18.5	39	12	26	2	2	147
Indianapolis	332.8	20.0	29	18	10	0	7	141
New England	325.4	19.5	39	22	16	0	2	141
Green Bay	297.8	17.9	37	21	12	0	3	139
New Orleans	348.1	25.4	36	17	14	0	5	138
N.Y. Jets	333.6	20.0	29	17	21	0	3	137
Arizona	275.5	16.7	35	23	13	1	1	133
Los Angeles	308.9	20.4	38	12	13	0	5	132
Detroit	337.8	21.4	27	12	11	1	7	129
Atlanta	364.3	24.1	32	22	11	0	3	127
Washington	350.6	25.8	28	17	6	1	7	127
N.Y. Giants	309.4	19.1	26	16	16	2	3	122
Seattle	334.3	20.2	29	19	11	1	3	121
Houston	307.2	22.0	31	14	12	1	2	111
Miami	332.9	20.4	29	23	9	0	1	111
St. Louis	323.1	22.8	26	14	6	1	4	106
Buffalo	323.4	22.5	25	16	12	1	1	103
Chicago	313.1	19.2	28	12	10	0	1	94
Cincinnati	322.1	25.4	31	10	8	1	1	87
Denver	369.2	24.8	23	12	14	0	0	86
Tampa Bay	333.5	21.9	20	9	12	0	1	80

KICKING

Name, Team	Under-50	Over-50	PATs	Points
1. Carney, SD	32-36	2-2	33-33	139
2. Reveiz, Minn	33-36	1-3	30-30	134
3. Elam, Den	29-34	1-3	29-29	121
4. Andersen, NO	28-33	0-6	32-32	116
5t. Boniol, Dall	22-28	0-1	48-48	114
5t. Christie, Buff	22-26	2-2	38-38	114
7. Pelfrey, Cin	26-29	2-4	24-25	112
8. Stover, Cle	26-27	0-1	32-32	110
9. Stoyanovich, Mia	23-29	1-2	35-35	109
10. Bahr, NE	27-34	—	36-36	107
11. Anderson, Pitt	23-27	1-2	32-32	106
12t. Brien, SF	15-19	0-1	60-62	105
12t. Elliot, KC	25-30	—	30-30	105
14. Jaeger, LA	20-26	2-2	31-31	101
15. Jacke, GB	18-23	1-3	41-43	100
16. N. Johnson, Atl	20-20	1-5	32-32	97
17. Murray, Phi	21-25	—	33-33	96
18. Hanson, Det	18-22	0-5	39-40	93
19t. Butler, Chi	19-25	2-4	24-24	91
19t. Husted, TB	22-30	1-5	20-20	91
21t. Biasucci, Ind	14-22	2-2	37-37	89
21t. Lohmiller, Wash	19-25	1-3	30-32	89
23. Kasay, Car	19-22	1-2	25-26	87
24. Lowery, NYJ	20-23	—	26-27	86
25. Zendejas, St. L	18-23	—	28-28	82
26. Davis, Ariz	19-22	1-4	17-17	79
27. Del Greco, Hou	15-17	1-3	18-18	68
28. Treadwell, NYG	11-17	—	22-23	55
29. Daluiso, NYG	10-10	1-1	5-5	40
30. Peterson, Sea	2-4	—	4-4	10

NFC

SCORING LEADERS

LEADING RUSHERS

	ATT	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Sanders, Det.	331	1883	5.7	85	7
E. Smith, Dal.	368	1484	4.0	46	21
Hampton, NYG	327	1075	3.3	27t	6
Allen, Min.	255	1031	4.0	45	8
Bettis, Rams	319	1025	3.2	19	3
Rhett, T.B.	284	1011	3.6	27	7
Tillman, Chi.	275	899	3.3	25t	7
Watters, S.F.	239	877	3.7	23	6
R. Moore, Ariz.	232	780	3.4	24	4
Heyward, Atl.	183	779	4.3	17	7
Erwins, Was.	185	650	3.5	49	3
Bennett, G.B.	178	623	3.5	39t	5
Bates, N.O.	151	579	3.8	40	6
Cobb, G.B.	153	579	3.8	30	3
Walker, Phi.	113	528	4.7	91t	5

t = touchdown

LEADING RECEIVERS RECEPTIONS

	NO	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Carter, Min.	122	1256	10.3	65t	7
Rice, S.F.	112	1499	13.4	69t	13
Mathis, Atl.	111	1342	12.1	81	11
Sharpe, G.B.	94	1119	11.9	49	18
Reed, Min.	85	1175	13.8	59	4
Early, N.O.	82	894	10.9	33	4
Rison, Atl.	81	1088	13.4	69t	8
Irvin, Dal.	79	1241	15.7	65t	6
Barnett, Phi.	78	1127	14.4	54	5
Bennett, G.B.	78	546	7.0	40	4
Haynes, N.O.	77	985	12.8	78t	5
Centers, Ariz.	77	647	8.4	36	2
Ellard, Was.	74	1397	18.9	73t	6
H. Moore, Det.	72	1173	16.3	51t	11
Graham, Chi.	68	944	13.9	76t	4

t = touchdown

PASSING

	ATT	COMP	COMP. PCT.	YDS	AVG GAIN	TD	LONG	INT	RATING
S. Young, S.F.	461	324	70.3	3969	8.61	35	69t	10	112.8
Favre, G.B.	582	363	62.4	3882	6.67	33	49	14	90.7
Everett, N.O.	540	346	64.1	3855	7.14	22	78t	18	84.9
Aikman, Dal.	361	233	64.5	2676	7.41	13	90	12	84.9
J. George, Atl.	524	322	61.5	3734	7.13	23	85t	18	83.3
Erickson, T.B.	399	225	56.4	2919	7.32	16	71t	10	82.5
Moon, Min.	601	371	61.7	4264	7.09	18	65t	19	79.9
Walsh, Chi.	343	208	60.6	2078	6.06	10	50	8	77.9
Cunningham, Phi	490	265	54.1	3229	6.59	16	93	13	74.4
Miller, Rams	317	173	54.6	2104	6.64	16	54	14	73.6
Brown, NYG	350	201	57.4	2536	7.25	12	53	16	72.5
Schroeder, Ariz.	238	133	55.9	1510	6.34	4	48t	7	68.4
Mitchell, Det.	246	119	48.4	1456	5.92	10	34	11	62.0
Beuerlein, Ariz.	255	130	51.0	1545	6.06	5	63	9	61.6
Shuler, Was.	265	120	45.3	1658	6.26	10	81t	12	59.6

t = touchdown

TOUCHDOWNS

	TD	RUSH	REC	RET	POINTS
E. Smith, Dal.	22	21	1	0	132
Sharpe, G.B.	18	0	18	0	108
Rice, S.F.	15	2	13	0	92
Mathis, Atl.	11	0	11	0	70
H. Moore, Det.	11	0	11	0	66
Watters, S.F.	11	6	5	0	66
Jones, S.F.	9	0	9	0	56
Bennett, G.B.	9	5	4	0	54
Allen, Min.	8	8	0	0	50
Rison, Atl.	8	0	8	0	50

*Points includes 2-point conversions

TOTAL YARDS FROM SCRIMMAGE

	TOTAL	RUSH	REC
Sanders, Det.	2166	1883	283
E. Smith, Dal.	1825	1484	341
Watters, S.F.	1596	877	719
Rice, S.F.	1592	93	1499
Ellard, Was.	1392	-5	1397
Mathis, Atl.	1342	0	1342
Bettis, Rams	1318	1025	293
Carter, Min.	1256	0	1256
Irvin, Dal.	1241	0	1241
Allen, Min.	1179	1031	148
Hampton, NYG	1178	1075	103
Reed, Min.	1175	0	1175
H. Moore, Det.	1173	0	1173
Bennett, G.B.	1169	623	546
Sharpe, G.B.	1134	15	1119

RECEIVING YARDS

	YDS	NO	AVG	LONG	TD
Rice, S.F.	1499	112	13.4	69t	13
Ellard, Was.	1397	74	18.9	73t	6
Mathis, Atl.	1342	111	12.1	81	11
Carter, Min.	1256	122	10.3	65t	7
Irvin, Dal.	1241	79	15.7	65t	6
Reed, Min.	1175	85	13.8	59	4
H. Moore, Det.	1173	72	16.3	51t	11
Barnett, Phi.	1127	78	14.4	54	5
Sharpe, G.B.	1119	94	11.9	49	18
Rison, Atl.	1088	81	13.4	69t	8
Haynes, N.O.	985	77	12.8	78t	5
Anderson, Rams	945	46	20.5	72t	5
Graham, Chi.	944	68	13.9	76t	4
Early, N.O.	894	82	10.9	33	4
Sherrard, NYG	825	53	15.6	55	6

t = touchdown

NFC STATS

KICKING

	PAT	FG	LG	Pts
Reveiz, Min.	30/30	34/39	51	132
Andersen, N.O.	32/32	28/39	48	116
Boniol, Dal.	48/48	22/29	47	114
Brien, S.F.	60/62	15/20	48	105
Jacke, G.B.	41/43	19/26	50	98
Murray, Phi.	33/33	21/25	42	96
N. Johnson, Atl.	32/32	21/25	50	95
Hanson, Det.	39/40	18/27	49	93
Lohmiller, Was.	30/32	20/28	54	90
Husted, T.B.	20/20	23/35	53	89
Butler, Chi.	24/24	21/29	52	87
Zendejas, Rams	28/28	18/23	47	82
Davis, Ariz.	17/17	20/26	51	77

KICKOFF RETURNS

	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Gray, Det.	45	1276	28.4	102t	3
Walker, Phi.	21	581	27.7	94t	1
K. Williams, Dal.	43	1148	26.7	87t	1
Mitchell, Was.	58	1478	25.5	86	0
Lewis, Chi.	35	874	25.0	55	0
Hughes, N.O.	63	1556	24.7	98t	2
Kinchen, Rams	21	510	24.3	46	0
Verdin, Atl.	44	1026	23.3	69	0
Lang, Rams	27	626	23.2	57	0
Ismail, Min.	35	807	23.1	61	0

INTERCEPTIONS

	INT	YARDS	LONG	TD
A. Williams, Ariz.	9	89	43	0
Hanks, S.F.	7	93	38	0
Sanders, S.F.	6	303	93t	3
G. Jackson, Phi.	6	86	55t	1
Clark, Atl.-N.O.	5	149	74	0
Woodson, Dal.	5	140	94t	1
Washington, Dal.	5	43	25	0
Buckley, G.B.	5	38	26	0
Woolford, Chi.	5	30	25	0
Spencer, N.O.	5	24	11	0
D. Johnson, Atl.	5	0	0	0

LEADING PUNTERS

	NO	YDS	LG	AVG	TB	BLK	RET	RET YDS	IN 20	NET AVG
Landeta, Rams	78	3494	62	44.8	9	0	47	637	23	34.3
Roby, Was.	82	3639	65	44.4	12	0	45	441	21	36.1
Montgomery, Det.	63	2782	64	44.2	8	1	36	431	19	34.2
Barnhardt, N.O.	67	2920	57	43.6	9	0	40	495	14	33.5
Saxon, Min.	77	3301	67	42.9	5	0	44	410	28	36.2
Jett, Dal.	70	2935	58	41.9	4	0	36	378	26	35.4
Horan, NYG	85	3521	63	41.4	7	2	39	307	25	35.3
Wilmsmeyer, S.F.	54	2235	60	41.4	3	0	28	242	18	35.8
Hentrich, G.B.	81	3351	70	41.4	10	0	36	272	24	35.5
Barker, Phi.	66	2696	67	40.8	7	0	37	158	20	36.3
Feagles, Ariz.	98	3997	54	40.8	10	0	40	270	33	36.0
Alexander, Atl.	71	2836	61	39.9	6	0	27	242	12	34.8
Stryzinski, T.B.	72	2800	53	38.9	6	0	18	94	20	35.9
Gardocki, Chi.	76	2871	57	37.8	9	0	26	225	23	32.4

SACK LEADERS

	NO.
Harvey, Was.	13.5
Randle, Min.	13.5
Haley, Dal.	12.5
C. Smith, Atl.	11.0
Conner, N.O.	10.5
Fuller, Phi.	10.5
Jones, G.B.	10.5
Martin, N.O.	10.0
Harmon, Phi.	9.0
Stubblefield, S.F.	8.5

TOTAL OFFENSE

	TOTAL	RUSH	PASS	AVG YPG	AVG RUSH	AVG PASS
San Francisco	6060	1897	4163	378.8	118.6	260.2
Minnesota	5848	1524	4324	365.5	95.3	270.3
Atlanta	5361	1249	4112	335.1	78.1	257.0
Dallas	5321	1953	3368	332.6	122.1	210.5
Green Bay	5316	1543	3773	332.3	96.4	235.8
New Orleans	5182	1336	3846	323.9	83.5	240.4
Philadelphia	5125	1761	3364	320.3	110.1	210.3
Detroit	5002	2080	2922	312.6	130.0	182.6
Washington	4793	1415	3378	299.6	88.4	211.1
Tampa Bay	4754	1489	3265	297.1	93.1	204.1
L.A. Rams	4747	1389	3358	296.7	86.8	209.9
Chicago	4679	1588	3091	292.4	99.3	193.2
Arizona	4607	1560	3047	287.9	97.5	190.4
N.Y. Giants	4316	1754	2562	269.8	109.6	160.1

TOTAL DEFENSE

	TOTAL	RUSH	PASS	AVG YPG	AVG RUSH	AVG PASS
Dallas	4313	1561	2752	269.6	97.6	172.0
Arizona	4408	1370	3038	275.5	85.6	189.9
Philadelphia	4710	1616	3094	294.4	101.0	193.4
Minnesota	4742	1090	3652	296.4	68.1	228.3
Green Bay	4764	1363	3401	297.8	85.2	212.6
San Francisco	4839	1338	3501	302.4	83.6	218.8
N.Y. Giants	4950	1728	3222	309.4	108.0	201.4
Chicago	5009	1922	3087	313.1	120.1	192.9
L.A. Rams	5170	1781	3389	323.1	111.3	211.8
Tampa Bay	5336	1964	3372	333.5	122.8	210.8
Detroit	5405	1859	3546	337.8	116.2	221.6
New Orleans	5569	1758	3811	348.1	109.9	238.2
Washington	5609	1975	3634	350.6	123.4	227.1
Atlanta	5829	1693	4136	364.3	105.8	258.5

AFC

SCORING LEADERS

LEADING RUSHERS

	ATT	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
C. Warren, Sea.	333	1545	4.6	41	9
Means, S.D.	343	1350	3.9	25	12
Faulk, Ind.	314	1282	4.1	52	11
T. Thomas, Buf.	287	1093	3.8	29	7
H. Williams, L.A.	282	983	3.5	28	4
J. Johnson, NYJ	240	931	3.9	90	3
Hoard, Cle.	209	890	4.3	39	5
Parmalee, Mia.	216	868	4.0	47t	6
Foster, Pitt.	216	851	3.9	29t	5
Morris, Pitt.	198	836	4.2	20	7
White, Hou.	191	757	4.0	33	3
Allen, K.C.	189	709	3.8	36t	7
Butts, N.E.	243	703	2.9	26	8
G. Brown, Hou.	169	648	3.8	18	4
L. Russell, Den.	190	620	3.3	22t	9

t = touchdown

TOTAL YARDS FROM SCRIMMAGE

	TOTAL	RUSH	REC
C. Warren, Sea.	1868	1545	323
Faulk, Ind.	1804	1282	522
Means, S.D.	1585	1350	235
T. Thomas, Buf.	1442	1093	349
Reed, Buff.	1390	87	1303
H. Williams, L.A.	1374	983	391
Hoard, Cle.	1335	890	445
Brown, L.A.	1309	0	1309
Fryar, Mia.	1270	0	1270
J. Johnson, NYJ	1234	931	303
Coates, N.E.	1174	0	1174
Pickens, Cin.	1127	0	1127
Blades, Sea.	1118	32	1086
Parmalee, Mia.	1117	868	249
Miller, Den.	1110	3	1107

TOUCHDOWNS

	TD	RUSH	REC	RET	POINTS
Faulk, Ind.	12	11	1	0	72
Means, S.D.	12	12	0	0	72
C. Warren, Sea.	11	9	2	0	66
Pickens, Cin.	11	0	11	0	66
Brown, L.A.	9	0	9	0	54
Hoard, Cle.	9	5	4	0	54
L. Russell, Den.	9	9	0	0	54
T. Thomas, Buf.	9	7	2	0	54
Butts, N. E.	8	8	0	0	48
Reed, Buf.	8	0	8	0	48

LEADING RECEIVERS RECEPTIONS

	NO	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Coates, N.E.	96	1174	12.2	62t	7
Reed, Buff.	90	1303	14.5	83t	8
Brown, L.A.	89	1309	14.7	77t	9
Sharpe, Den.	87	1010	11.6	44	4
Blades, Sea.	81	1086	13.4	45	4
Moore, NYJ	78	1010	12.9	41t	6
Milburn, Den.	77	549	7.1	33	3
Timpson, N.E.	74	941	12.7	37	3
Fryar, Mia.	73	1270	17.4	54t	7
Pickens, Cin.	71	1127	15.9	70t	11
Slaughter, Hou.	68	846	12.4	57	2
Jeffries, Hou.	68	783	11.5	50	6
Anders, K.C.	67	525	7.8	30	1
Thompson, N.E.	65	465	7.2	27t	5
Miller, Den.	60	1107	18.5	76	5

t = touchdown

RECEIVING YARDS

	YDS	NO	AVG	LONG	TD
Brown, L.A.	1309	89	14.7	77t	9
Reed, Buff.	1303	90	14.5	83t	8
Fryar, Mia.	1270	73	17.4	54t	7
Coates, N.E.	1174	96	12.2	62t	7
Pickens, Cin.	1127	71	15.9	70t	11
Miller, Den.	1107	60	18.5	76	5
Blades, Sea.	1086	81	13.4	45	4
Moore, NYJ	1010	78	12.9	41t	6
Sharpe, Den.	1010	87	11.6	44	4
Timpson, N.E.	941	74	12.7	37	3
Brisby, N.E.	904	58	15.6	43	5
Martin, S.D.	885	50	17.7	99t	7
Scott, Cin.	866	46	18.8	76	5
Slaughter, Hou.	846	68	12.4	57	2
Alexander, Cle.	828	48	17.3	81t	2

t = touchdown

PASSING

	ATT	COMP	COMP. PCT.	YDS	AVG GAIN	TD	LONG	INT	RATING POINTS
Marino, Mia.	615	385	62.6	4453	7.24	30	64t	17	89.2
Elway, Den.	494	307	62.1	3490	7.06	16	63	10	85.7
Kelly, Buff.	448	285	63.6	3114	6.95	22	83t	17	84.6
Montana, K.C.	493	299	60.6	3283	6.66	16	57t	9	83.6
Humphries, S.D.	453	264	58.3	3209	7.08	17	99t	12	81.6
Hostetler, L.A.	454	263	57.9	3334	7.34	20	77t	16	81.0
O'Donnell, Pitt.	370	212	57.3	2443	6.60	13	60t	9	78.9
Esiason, NYJ	440	255	58.0	2782	6.32	17	69	13	77.3
Blake, Cin.	306	156	51.0	2154	7.04	14	76	9	76.9
Bledsoe, N.E.	691	400	57.9	4555	6.59	25	62t	27	73.6
Testaverde, Cle.	376	207	55.1	2575	6.85	16	81t	18	70.7
Mirer, Sea.	381	195	51.2	2151	5.65	11	51	7	70.2
Klingler, Cin.	231	131	56.7	1327	5.74	6	56	9	65.7
Tolliver, Hou.	240	121	50.4	1287	5.36	6	44	7	62.6

t = touchdown

AFC STATS

KICKING

	PAT	FG	LG	Pts
Carney, San Diego	33/33	34/38	50	135
Elam, Denver	29/29	30/37	54	119
Bahr, New England	36/36	27/34	48	117
Christie, Buffalo	38/38	24/28	52	110
Stover, Cleveland	32/32	26/28	45	110
Pelfrey, Cincinnati	24/25	28/33	54	108
Stoyanovich, Miami	35/35	24/31	50	107
Elliott, Kansas City	30/30	25/30	49	105
G. Anderson, Pittsburgh	32/32	24/29	50	104
Jaeger, L.A. Raiders	31/31	22/28	51	97
Lowery, New York Jets	26/27	20/23	49	86
Biasucci, Indianapolis	37/37	16/24	50	85
Kasay, Seattle	25/26	20/24	50	85

KICKOFF RETURNS

	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Baldwin, Cle.	28	753	26.9	85t	1
Coleman, S.D.	49	1293	26.4	90t	2
Vaughn, Sea.-K.C.	33	829	25.1	93t	2
By'Not'e, Den.	24	545	22.7	41	0
Dickerson, K.C.	21	472	22.5	62	0
Humphrey, Ind.	35	783	22.4	95t	1
Jourdain, Buff.	27	601	22.3	42	0
Ball, Cin.	42	915	21.8	43	0
Glenn, NYJ	27	582	21.6	45	0
Ismail, L.A.	43	923	21.5	51	0

t = touchdown

INTERCEPTIONS

	INT	YARDS	LONG	TD
Turner, Cle.	9	199	93t	1
Buchanan, Ind.	8	221	90t	3
Perry, Pitt.	7	112	42	0
McDaniel, L.A.	7	103	35	2
Hurst, N.E.	7	68	24	0
Turner, NYJ	5	155	90t	1
Vincent, Mia.	5	113	58t	1
Hasty, NYJ	5	90	40	0
D. Lewis, Hou.	5	57	20	0
Richard, S.D.	4	224	99t	2
Woodson, Pitt.	4	109	37t	2
Lewis, NYJ	4	106	67t	2
Dishman, Hou.	4	74	38	1
Gordon, S.D.	4	32	23	0
Darby, Buff.	4	20	20	0

t = touchdown

LEADING PUNTERS

	NO	YDS	LG	AVG	TB	BLK	RET	RET YDS	IN 20	NET AVG
Gossett, L.A.	77	3377	65	43.9	15	0	38	366	19	35.2
L. Johnson, Cin.	79	3461	64	43.8	9	1	43	459	19	35.3
Tuten, Sea.	91	3905	64	42.9	7	0	43	426	33	36.7
Rouen, Den.	76	3258	59	42.9	8	0	39	275	23	37.1
Camarillo, Hou.	96	4115	58	42.9	9	0	50	438	34	36.4
Stark, Ind.	73	3092	60	42.4	10	1	40	366	22	34.1
Aguiar, K.C.	85	3582	61	42.1	7	0	50	506	15	34.5
Hansen, NYJ	84	3534	64	42.1	12	0	38	260	25	36.1
Mohr, Buff.	67	2799	71	41.8	3	0	38	324	13	36.0
Wagner, S.D.	65	2705	59	41.6	3	0	38	348	20	35.3
O'Neill, N.E.	69	2841	67	41.2	6	0	34	260	25	35.7
Tupa, Cle.	80	3211	65	40.1	8	0	38	220	27	35.4
Royals, Pitt.	97	3849	64	39.7	6	0	39	263	35	35.7
Arnold, Mia.	46	1810	53	39.3	4	0	26	189	14	33.5

SACKS

	NO
Greene, Pitt.	14.0
O'Neal, S.D.	12.5
Smith, K.C.	11.5
Mims, S.D.	11.0
Thomas, K.C.	11.0
Burnett, Cle.	10.0
Lloyd, Pitt.	10.0
B. Smith, Buff.	10.0
Cross, Mia.	9.5
McGlockton, L.A.	9.5
Slade, N.E.	9.5
A. Williams, Cin.	9.5

TOTAL OFFENSE

	TOTAL	RUSH	PASS	AVG YPG	AVG RUSH	AVG PASS
Miami	6078	1658	4420	379.9	103.6	276.3
New England	5776	1332	4444	361.0	83.3	277.8
Kansas City	5692	1732	3960	355.8	108.3	247.5
Denver	5487	1470	4017	342.9	91.9	251.1
Buffalo	5244	1831	3413	327.8	114.4	213.3
San Diego	5220	1852	3368	326.3	115.8	210.5
Pittsburgh	5144	2180	2964	321.5	136.3	185.3
Cleveland	4832	1657	3175	302.0	103.6	198.4
Cincinnati	4792	1556	3236	299.5	97.3	202.3
L.A. Raiders	4779	1512	3267	298.7	94.5	204.2
N.Y. Jets	4703	1566	3137	293.9	97.9	196.1
Seattle	4652	2084	2568	290.8	130.3	160.5
Houston	4481	1682	2799	280.1	105.1	174.9
Indianapolis	4413	2060	2353	275.8	128.8	147.1

TOTAL DEFENSE

	TOTAL	RUSH	PASS	AVG YPG	AVG RUSH	AVG PASS
Pittsburgh	4326	1452	2874	270.4	90.8	179.6
Cleveland	4826	1669	3157	301.6	104.3	197.3
Houston	4915	2120	2795	307.2	132.5	174.7
L.A. Raiders	4943	1543	3400	308.9	96.4	212.5
Kansas City	5000	1734	3266	312.5	108.4	204.1
San Diego	5062	1404	3658	316.4	87.8	228.6
Cincinnati	5154	1906	3248	322.1	119.1	203.0
Buffalo	5175	1515	3660	323.4	94.7	228.8
New England	5207	1760	3447	325.4	110.0	215.4
Miami	5224	1430	3794	326.5	89.4	237.1
Indianapolis	5325	1646	3679	332.8	102.9	229.9
N.Y. Jets	5338	1809	3529	333.6	113.1	220.6
Seattle	5349	1952	3397	334.3	122.0	212.3
Denver	5907	1752	4155	369.2	109.5	259.7



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